

WILD WEST



A MAGAZINE CONTAINING STORIES. SKETCHES Etc. OF WESTERN LIFE.

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YOUNG WILD WEST'S STRATEGY:

OR, THE COMANCHE CHIEF'S LAST RAID.

By AN OLD SCOUT.

AND OTHER STORIES



She had fainted from sheer fright, but he soon got hold of her and picked her up in his arms. Then he strode out of the tepee, just as the cavalry came dashing up to the camp.

WILD WEST WEEKLY

A Magazine Containing Stories, Sketches, Etc., of Western Life

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— OR —

THE COMANCHE CHIEF'S LAST RAID

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CHAPTER I.

THE MESSENGER FROM FORT SMITH.

It was a cold, dreary day in early December. As the north wind whistled through the brown needles of the scraggy mountain pines it made a refrain that was decidedly mournful.

The sky had been leaden hued since early morning, with an occasional dull gleam of sunlight that came struggling through the senarrying clouds.

There was snow in the air, and at least nine-tenths of the residents of the mining town of Weston, Dakota Territory, knew it.

We say Dakota Territory, because at the time of which we write that vast section of the West had not been divided into two States and admitted into the Union as North and South Dakota.

A solitary horseman, wearing the blue uniform of a cavalryman, was riding swiftly along the road that led from the open prairie over the eastern range of the Black Hills to the mining town we have just mentioned.

Both horse and rider were weary, and there were blood stains on both, showing that they had recently passed through an engagement of some kind.

Night was fast approaching, and the lone rider showed signs of great anxiety.

"Oh, if I can only get there before dark," he exclaimed, half aloud. "The snow will begin to fall as the sun goes down. I feel sure of that. I must deliver this dispatch from the general to Young Wild West to-night, and I do not want to get lost in a snowstorm on the mountain-side and be balked in doing it. On, Billy! On, my good horse! It can't be over five or six miles further."

The horse, thus urged, sprang forward at a faster gait, and naught could be heard but the regular hoof-beats and the howling of the wind through the trees that lined the road on either side.

Two miles were passed, and then the horse began to slacken speed, in spite of the urging of the rider.

The faithful steed had done his best, but now he was completely fagged out.

The cavalryman realized that he could go no further without giving the animal a rest.

Reluctantly he dismounted and patted the animal on the head.

The shades of night had now gathered, and as the man looked around a tiny snowflake dropped on his cheek.

The movement had begun.

The panting horse was fairly leaning against a big bowlder at the roadside, and the steam from his perspiring body arose in thin clouds.

You have carried me too far to ill-treat you any further, Billy," the rider said, as he patted his horse on the nose.

Then he looked around for a good place where he might rest, shielded from the wind, for he was almost as tired as the horse.

There was a cleft in the rocks a few yards away, and the ground was covered with pine needles that had been blown from the tree that stood over the cozy-looking spot.

As he looked at it the soldier horseman felt more tired than ever.

The pine needles and the dead branches of the tree suggested a campfire.

The snowflakes began to fall thickly now, and as he did not know just how far he might have to travel before he reached Weston, the man resolved to stop there a while.

No sooner decided upon than he was at work scraping the pine needles in a heap.

They were thicker than he thought, and in five minutes he had such a big pile of them that he divided them in two parts.

One heap he pushed back beneath an overhanging rock and the other he set on fire.

Then he piled twigs and branches on the blaze and soon had a roaring fire that took off the chill.

The odor of the burning pine was pleasant to him, and suggested more than ever that he take a rest, so without any further hesitation, he led the tired horse to the heap of needles and bade him lie down.

The animal must have understood, for the saddle girths had no sooner become loosened than he almost dropped to the ground.

Knapsack and saddle-bags were quickly gone through, with the result that a small piece of bacon and some coffee were found in the one, and a little more than a quart of oats in the other.

One of the blankets was tossed over the steaming horse, and the other the cavalryman rolled up and sat upon.

Then with the small stew pan he carried in his outfit he started in to make some coffee.

But in order to do this he must have some water, and there was none about, as far as he could see.

But he must have it now, so he got up and searched about.

He found a stream that was not frozen within a hundred yards of his blazing fire, and filling his pan, he went back and soon had the fragrant beverage simmering over the coals.

With his knife he cut the bacon into slices, and put them on to broil.

Meanwhile the flakes were falling thicker and faster, and by the time the coffee was done it was as dark as a pocket.

The snowstorm was under full headway now, and it was such a snug place under the ledge of rock that the cavalryman concluded to turn in.

He gave his horse the oats he had, after first making him get up, and then he piled wood on the fire and topped off with three logs locked together in the center.

By doing this he thought he would have a fire that would last all night.

When he first stopped he had only intended to stay there an hour, but he was now intent upon staying until he got a good rest.

It would not have done to let the horse lie down very long, as the animal might become so stiffened as to be unable to get up.

The pile of pine needles made an inviting couch, and covering himself well with his blankets, with the roaring fire on one side of him and the dry wall of rock on the other, he lay down, and almost in a minute after he was fast asleep.

Just how long the tired horseman had slept he had no idea, but it must have been three or four hours later when he was awakened by some one shaking him, and hearing a voice say:

"Come, stranger, get up out of this. You'll freeze to death! Come, hurry up, now! Jove! You are as stiff as an icicle now!"

Bewildered, and, in truth, nearly frozen, the man, whose brain was now muddled so that he did not know where he was, struggled to his feet.

The wind had shifted since he had laid down and the whirling snow had extinguished the fire, which he thought would surely last.

"Your horse saved you, stranger," said the voice. "I was headin' for Weston as fast as I could go, when I heard a whinny, an' then ther critter runs right out before me. Of course I stopped then, an' it wasn't long afore I located your camp here. Jest take a drink out of this bottle, an' then you'll feel better."

He placed a bottle of whisky to the lips of the cavalryman, who took a deep draught.

"Now, jump about till you git ther frost worked out of yer. I'll put ther saddle on yer horse."

"Thank you," was the reply, and he proceeded to do just as he was bid.

In a couple of minutes the man was himself again, and he was assisted to mount his faithful horse.

"Now," said his dark-bearded rescuer, "I s'pose you are goin' to Weston, ain't you?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Come from some fort, I reckon?"

"Yes; from Fort Smith. I've had a ride of it, I can tell you!"

"Well, it would have been all over with you if I hadn't come along jest as I did. I was over in Spondulicks on a little business for Young Wild West, and I reckoned I'd have a better chance of gittin' back to-night than I would if I'd waited till to-morrow."

"Been on an errand for Young Wild West, you say? That is the man I'm looking for. What is your name, my friend?"

"I go by ther name of Cheyenne Charlie," was the answer. "What might yourn be?"

"George Delaney. I am a private in Troop G, from Fort Smith."

"An' you have come all ther way from there to see Young Wild West, have you?"

"Yes; I bear a dispatch from General Johnson."

"Well, I am mighty glad I met you, for I am one of Young Wild West's partners, I am. I went over to Spondulicks, which is fifteen miles from Weston, this afternoon, on a little business for the Wild West Mining and Improvement Company, of which Wild is the treasurer, so I thought I'd better come back to-night. It's about ten o'clock now, an' we've only got about three miles to go."

"If I had known I was as close to Weston as that I would have gone on, as soon as I had rested my horse a few minutes. He gave out on me, you know. I had been riding for thirty-six hours, with hardly a rest. I got in a scrimmage with Indians, and just saved my scalp by the skin of my teeth. I was that fagged out that when I got that fire started and swallowed my coffee, I couldn't resist the temptation to lie down a little while."

"An' it came mighty near bein' the last lay down for you. If your horse hadn't come out on ther road an' stopped me

I'd have gone right on, an' then in a few hours more you'd have been froze to death."

"I believe you, Cheyenne Charlie. Let me shake your hand. I forgot to thank you, and will do so now, with all my heart. May I live long enough to be able to repay you."

"Don't mention it, my friend. By Jove! I believe it is lettin' up a little. Well, we kin git along without ther snow, though I s'pose ther settlers down near Nebrasky line will be a little bit glad, 'cause it will be apt to make ther redskins lay low for a while. I hear they are gettin' mighty troublesome ag'in down that way."

"Yes; that is why I am coming over here to see Young Wild West, I guess."

"Want him at Fort Smith, do they?"

"Yes; I think so. I don't know for a fact, but I think that is what the message is for. The settlers have suffered terribly in the last two weeks, and the Indians have worked in such a sly manner that we have been unable to do much damage to them. They ambushed a company of regulars the day before yesterday and wiped them all out but fourteen. The general said he must have some good, experienced scouts, and have them as soon as possible. That is why he sent me to Weston with a message to Young Wild West, I suppose."

"Well, if that is ther case, it means me, Jim Dart an' Jack Robedee, too, I shouldn't wonder. Well, most likely we kin accommodate ther general."

The messenger appeared to be very much pleased to hear the scout talk this way.

"The very best of scouts are needed," he said. "There is one particular band of five or six hundred that is doing all the sly work. It is composed of Sioux, Comanches and Crows, and the leader is a Comanche chief named Running Fox. He is as sly as his name would signify, and he is a great friend of old Sitting Bull."

"I think I have heard of Running Fox. So he has ventured up this far north, has he? There must be some big inducement in it for him."

"He has the best control over the braves under him, and shows up the best head-work of any chief who ever led a band of raiders, so it is said."

"Well, then, ther quicker he is sent to ther Happy Huntin' Grounds the better it will be."

"That's right."

The two were riding along at a pretty good pace.

The horse of George Delaney, the messenger from the fort, had limbered up wonderfully, showing what a tough beast he was.

The snow was about twelve or fourteen inches in depth, but as Cheyenne Charlie had said, it was letting up.

When they had covered two miles it ceased altogether.

It was still pretty cold, however, and occasionally the two men would have to beat their hands.

"I can't say that I like winter weather much," said Cheyenne Charlie, as he wiped the snow and ice from his heavy, drooping mustache.

"No; nor I, either," replied the cavalryman.

"How long are you in their service?"

"A little over three years. I enlisted for five years. I was out of work, and one day in New York, along with a couple of friends, I enlisted to serve my country, and the first thing they did with us was to send us to the West to fight Indians. Though I can't say I am sorry, I will say that fighting Indians is not such a pleasant thing as I thought it was when I used to read about it. It is my ambition to be promoted, and I think I will be a corporal before long. My delivering this message all right will probably help me along. I should like to get to be captain. That would be the height of my ambition."

"Well, I hope you'll reach it, an' if I'm any judge, I think you will. You are a likely young feller, I must say. You ain't over twenty-five, I reckon."

"No; only twenty-four."

"Well, if you like the life of a soldier, stick to it, an' you'll make your mark."

They were now rapidly nearing Weston, and a few minutes later they could see the lights from it far below them.

When they did reach the town Cheyenne Charlie took the messenger from the fort straight to the house of Young Wild West.

CHAPTER II.

WILD AND THE HALF-BREED

Young Wild West, Jim Dart and Jack Robedee were just thinking about turning in when Cheyenne Charlie and the messenger from the fort arrived.

They had not been expecting Charlie back that night, as it had been quite late in the afternoon when he set out for Spauldicks.

Consequently they were very much surprised.

There was a good fire burning on the old-fashioned hearth and the two newcomers pushed up close to it.

"This is George Delaney, from Fort Smith, Wild," said Charlie. "He has a message from General Jackson to you."

"That so?" and the handsome young scout shook hands with Delaney.

"I am awful glad to become acquainted with you, Mr. West," said the cavalryman, as he shook the hand offered to him in a very hearty manner.

Then he unbuttoned his coat and produced an envelope bearing the stamp of Fort Smith.

It was addressed to "Mr. Young Wild West, Weston, Dakota," and as soon as Wild had read the inscription he tore it open and read the following:

"MR. YOUNG WILD WEST, Weston, Dakota:

"DEAR SIR—I have decided that I must have some scouts to aid my men in subduing the Indian uprising in this vicinity. You and three or four friends of yours have been highly recommended as being the best strategists in Indian warfare in this part of the territory, and therefore I respectfully ask you to lend your aid as soon as possible after this communication reaches you. There is a whole regiment of Indians, who are the worst to be found in several tribes, and who are led by the most wily and dangerous chief we have yet had to contend with. This chief is a Comanche, and bears the name of Running Fox. His shrewd tactics in making his raids on the settlers makes him a dangerous enemy. The compensation for your services will be liberal, so kindly report at the fort as soon as possible. Should you not be able to get over here at once, send answer by the messenger who bears this to you.

"Yours, etc.,

"JASPER H. JOHNSON,

"Commander, Fort Smith."

Wild read this over carefully and then handed the communication to Jim Dart.

"Read it so we all can hear it, Jim," he said. "And then let us hear the opinions from you all. The four of us should go, I suppose."

Jim did as he was directed.

"Well," he observed, when he had finished, "I, for one, am willing to give Running Fox, the bold Comanche, a turn."

"Me, too," chimed in Jack Robedee.

"An' you kin count on me every time!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie.

"That settles it," said Young Wild West. "We will report to General Johnson as soon as we can get there. Private Delaney, that is your answer."

The cavalryman saluted with the words "Thank you, sir!" on his lips.

Jim then called Wing Wah, the Chinese cook, and got him to make a couple of bowls of coffee, and Jack went out and saw to it that Delaney's horse was taken care of.

Cheyenne Charlie lingered long enough to render his report, and then went over to his own home.

But he drank the hot coffee before taking his departure.

"Now, then, Mr. Delaney," said Wild, "as soon as we can get ready to go with you to Fort Smith we will do so; providing, of course, that the weather allows us to. About the day after to-morrow we will start, I guess."

"I am glad of that," was the reply.

"And you will stay right here with us and be our guest until we do start."

"Thank you."

"Go and take a good wash, and Jack will plaster up that scratch you have on your face. Then you can turn in and sleep as late in the morning as you desire. You need not worry about your horse; he will have the best of care."

Once more the cavalryman said "Thank you!"

He was overjoyed at falling into such good hands, and he hardly knew how to express himself.

Half an hour later he was enjoying a rest and sleep such as he had had no idea of getting that night.

The sun rose bright and clear the next morning.

The dreaded heavy snowstorm had not kept up, after all, though enough snow had fallen to put a decidedly wintry aspect on the scene.

Even on the mountains it would remain till spring, but in

the valley where Weston was situated the sun would soon melt it away.

Young Wild West got up shortly after six, as did the rest of the inmates of the bachelor home, excepting George Delaney, the messenger from the fort.

They were going to let him sleep as long as he wanted to, for they knew he must have had a hard time of it in riding one hundred miles from the fort over mountain and plain.

After breakfast Wild mounted his horse and rode over to the post-office.

He wanted to see his sweetheart, Arietta Murdock, and tell her that he was going off on the trail again.

Arietta, who was the postmistress, had just got there when Wild entered the office.

"Good-morning, Wild!" she cried, laughingly. "The snow has made you get around a little earlier than usual, I see."

"Well, Et, I can't say that the snow did it. I wanted to tell you something, and I thought the quicker I told it to you the better it would be; so that is why I came around as soon as I got my breakfast. I am going away from Weston for a week or so."

"What!" and the girl's color changed.

"Yes, Et; we are all going—Jim, Charlie, Jack and myself. Read that."

He handed her the message from Fort Smith as he spoke.

She read it carefully, every word of it, and then handed it back.

"Wild, why are you going on such a dangerous mission as that?" she asked.

"I must be needed, or the commander of the fort would not send for me, Et. Don't you think I ought to go, if by doing so the lives of a whole lot of innocent women and children will be saved?"

"Are there not others who can do what they want you to?"

"Probably, little one; but the general has not found them. That is why he sent for me, and for Charlie and the rest."

"Then you are surely going?"

"Yes; to-morrow morning, if nothing happens."

"But, Wild, you have heard of this Comanche. He is said to be the most cruel of all the chiefs."

"I know that, Et, and that is one reason why I want to go as a scout and help hunt him down. I'll guarantee you that he won't make any more raids after we have been on his trail a week."

"Well, seeing that you are so bent on going, I might as well give my consent."

"That is what I wanted to hear from your pretty lips, sweetheart. Now I will go and feel perfectly safe. I will wear the charm you made several months ago, and with that next to my heart I will be bound to come out all safe and sound."

Then Young Wild West stole a kiss from the girl of his choice and left the little post-office.

He now felt much better, as he certainly did allow himself to be influenced by her.

He did not go back home right away, but stopped in the Gazoo Hotel to see Brown, the proprietor.

There was a motley crowd gathered there on this snowy morning.

Almost every man had his shovel with him, having shoveled his way from his shanty to the street in the center of the town, so it would be easy traveling for the women folks to and from the stores.

They were all talking about the snowstorm, of course, and a great many of them were drinking hot whisky.

Brown had received a fresh supply of spices, and the miners were loud in their praise of the drinks he brewed that morning.

Almost every man in the place had a pleasant word for Young Wild West when he entered, and he returned the many salutes he received in his usual free-and-easy way.

"Hot drinks are all the go this morning, Wild," said Brown. "I am just treating the boys, and as I know you don't drink anything strong, the best I can do for you is to offer you a good Havana cigar."

"I'll accept that," answered our hero. "It is not so very long ago that I ate a hearty breakfast, and if there is any time that I enjoy a good smoke, it is right after eating a meal."

"That's right. I know just what you like. You try that cigar. That is a brand that they are selling out in Denver for a dollar apiece. I get fifty cents for them, and I am satisfied with the profit I make."

Wild took the cigar and lighted it.

It was really a good cigar, and he leaned against the wall and prepared to enjoy himself for a few minutes.

But just then an angry discussion arose in the back room, and, like the rest of those in the barroom, he pricked up his ears.

The next instant a pistol shot rang out, and then he knew there was trouble for fair in the room.

He was one of the first to reach the doorway, and he was just in time to see that there was a fight over a game of cards.

A man had been shot, and he was lying face downward over the table.

The man who had fired the shot stood up, the still smoking weapon in his hand.

This fellow was a half-breed Indian, and the savage look that shot from his eyes warned the frequenters of the place that he was a dangerous man.

"He cheat an' I shoot!" said the half-breed, in answer to the inquiring looks that the men gave him.

Both the slayer and the victim were strangers in Weston. They had arrived there together that morning and appeared to be friends.

There were two other men at the table, and as one of them attempted to explain the circumstances the half-breed covered him with his revolver and ordered him to shut up.

Young Wild West happened to be well acquainted with this man, and as far as he knew his reputation for telling the truth was all right.

"See here!" he exclaimed, "if you were justified in shooting that man you shouldn't object to having a witness tell how it occurred. Just sit down, please."

The eyes of the swarthy faced man blazed like coals of fire as he turned his gaze upon Wild.

"Boy has too much to say," said he. "Go away, or I shoot you!"

"Oh, no, you won't!" and as quick as a flash our hero had his revolver leveled at his heart. "You sit down!"

There was a deathly silence for the space of a couple of seconds, and then the half-breed dropped back in his chair.

"Now, then, go on and say what you were going to," remarked Wild, looking at the man who had attempted to explain.

"Well, I was just going to say that it was not ther feller what got shot that was doin' ther cheatin'; it was him, an' when ther other feller caught onto him, an' said somethin', he got a bullet atween ther eyes."

"That is just about the way I thought it was," said Wild. "Now, then, has the dead man got any friends here?"

There was no reply to this.

"I was his friend," the half-breed ventured to say.

"And you shot him to show just how much you liked him, I suppose."

"He no good; he tried to kill me last night."

"Well," observed Brown, speaking up, "you just go and git an undertaker an' have that carcass buried, or you'll get shot full of holes! Understand that?"

"Yes; me understand."

"Well, put up that shooter, then," Young Wild West added. "If you don't I'll show you how close I can come to that left eye of yours."

The rascal, for he was nothing short of one, quailed before the gaze of the boy, and like a whipped cur, he obeyed the command.

He was a big, athletic fellow, too, and his eyes resembled those of a hawk.

As soon as he had thrust his revolver back in his belt, he

arose from the table and made his way through the barroom and out of the place.

But in a little while he returned with an undertaker, and the body was quickly removed.

He paid the burial fee right then and there, and then turning to Wild, said:

"Me name Joe Antelope; we meet again. You Young Wild West. Me find that out."

"All right, Joe Antelope, if we do meet again, you just be careful how you behave, that's all I have got to tell you," was the reply.

"Me no afraid of Young Wild West."

"You shouldn't be. If you have got a grudge against me, go ahead and have it out. See, my hands are not near my belt!"

The half-breed did not accept the invitation, though he looked as though he would have liked to very much.

He shook his head, and then, with a fierce scowl, left the place.

"You have made an enemy of that fellow, Wild," said Brown, shaking his head to emphasize his words.

"I can't help it. I didn't like his looks the instant I set eyes on him. If he had his just deserts he would be in the same box as the fellow he shot. At any rate, he don't want to bother his time with me, for if he does I will shoot him as quick as I would a catamount."

CHAPTER III.

THE START FOR THE FORT.

When Young Wild West got back to the house he found that George Delaney was up and eating his breakfast.

The cook was piling the eatables before him, and he was "filling in" as only a hungry man can.

Wild did not speak to him until he had finished the meal.

Then he took him out to the office, where the rest of our friends were gathered.

Each officer of the company had a desk of his own, and when Wild walked in with the messenger from the fort the chairs behind all the desks but one were occupied.

That was our hero's.

This was a new wrinkle, it seemed, especially for Weston, but Dove-Eye Dave, the president, had been in the office of a similar concern over in Spondulicks, and he had noticed that each officer had a desk, so he insisted that the Wild West Mining and Improvement Company should be equipped in the same way.

Since the old man could scarcely write his own name, there was little need for a desk for him, but he wanted to be on an equal footing with the rest of the companies, and he was allowed to have his own way.

Cheyenne Charlie and Jack Robedee looked about as much out of place behind desks as a yoke of oxen hitched to a sulky would.

Rex Moore, the bookkeeper, could not help smiling every time he looked at them.

Jim Dart and Wild did all the signing of documents, so it is probable that they did need desks more than any of the other officers.

The truth of the matter was that none of them were needed to run the business, except in a general way, as they had honest and efficient employees working for them.

Walter Jenkins, the superintendent, and Rex Moore, the bookkeeper, were perfectly capable of running the business.

This made it easy for any of our friends to get away whenever they liked.

Delaney was surprised when he saw what a nice office they had, and he did not hesitate to say so.

"It looks like business here, anyway," he observed, as he took a seat.

"Yes; we do quite a little business in the mining part, but the selling of our property does not amount to much just now, since we have little or none to sell. Pay dirt is being dug from our mines every day by the men, and our superintendent has got a system that makes everything run straight as a die."

After a while the conversation drifted to the Comanche chief, Running Fox.

All hands had heard of him, except the bookkeeper, who had been a mere tenderfoot but a couple of months before, and they all seemed anxious to come in contact with him.

"We want to fit ourselves out well," remarked Wild. "We will have lots of snow and ice to contend with, though when we once get down on the level plains the weather won't be as severe as it is here. We must have a good supply of coffee, salt and matches."

"An' plenty of cartridges an' warm blankets," added Robedee.

"It would be a good idea to start in right away and get things ready for an early start to-morrow morning," spoke up Jim. "I hardly think it is going to snow any more."

"No," observed Dove-Eye Dave, as he got up and looked out of the window. "There ain't goin' to be any more snow in a couple of days at the soonest. It started in all right yesterday, but it turned out to be a false alarm. You fellows will git to the fort all right, I reckon."

So they started right in to get things ready, and 'long before night there was not a single thing that they had forgotten.

"Wild, what did Arietta say when you told her you were going?" Jim asked, as they were putting the last touches to their saddle-bags.

"Oh, of course she did not like it much at first; but she was not long in giving her consent."

"The same way with Eloise. She even cried when I told her the Comanche chief we were going on the trail of was the most dangerous redskin known, except old Sitting Bull himself."

"But she gave her consent?"

"Yes."

"How about you, Jack? Did Martha like the idea of you going on the plains to hunt Indians?"

"No," was the reply: "she begged me not to go; but when I told her it was necessary that I should go with you, she said, 'All right, then; but do just as Wild says, an' then you won't be so apt to git into trouble.'"

"I am glad so many people have confidence in me," and Young Wild West laughed. "I hope you will do just as she told you to, now."

"Don't I always do as you say?" questioned Jack, showing that he was in great earnest.

"Yes; I must say that you do; but you don't have to, do you?"

"Well, I think you know a great deal more than I do—about fighting redskins an' everything else. That's why I always do as you say."

"Some of these times I might tell you to do something that you won't want to do."

"I ain't afraid of that, Wild. Not as long as you are in your right mind."

Charlie Charlie came up just then. He had been over to his home to get some trifle that he wanted to take with him on his journey, and he was in time to hear what they were talking about.

"My wife objected a little when I told her I was goin'," he said. "But I soon hushed it over with her. I told her

that it was a great compliment to us at bein' sent for, an' when I told her our mission would be for the purpose of savin' the lives of innocent women an' children, she said, 'Go on, then, but be careful. Don't run in any needless danger, an' do just as Wild tells you.'"

Again Young Wild West laughed.

"Jim," remarked he, "did Eloise tell you to be careful and do just as I told you, too?"

"Well, I may as well tell you that she did. I didn't tell you at first, because I thought it made it look as though she thought I was not able to take care of myself. But that is just what she told me, and I assured her that I would. And now I want you to understand that I will, too. You are the recognized leader of this expedition, and it is the duty of all of us to do as you tell us to. I suppose that Arietta told you to do just as you liked, as there was no one for you to look to for a boss."

"Well, she did not tell me that exactly, but she did tell me to be awfully careful. Come to think of it, I believe she wants me to do as she says."

There was a good-natured laugh all around at this.

George Delaney, who had been taking it all in, then spoke up.

"Since you have all spoken on that subject," he said, "I will tell you what General Johnson told me when I set out from the fort. He said, 'Delaney, if Young Wild West should ride back with you to the fort, you must consider yourself under his command, and you must do exactly as he tells you to do.' So you see we have all been instructed to obey Young Wild West."

"Well, I will start right in now giving orders, then," observed Wild. "To supper, every one of you!"

Without so much as cracking a smile, they obeyed, Charlie making for his house and the rest going to the commodious bachelor quarters on the brow of the hill back of the office.

The weather moderated a little more that night, and Wild was afraid that another storm was brewing.

But none came, and the next morning the sun arose with the promise of a good day.

A few minutes after sunrise the party of five set out for Fort Smith.

They took an extra horse with them to carry the supplies they would need in the way of blankets and food.

It would take them more than a day to get over the range, but being pretty thoroughly acquainted with that part of the country, Wild had figured on a place to stop for the night.

Their first halt was at noon, and then it did not take them long to form a camp and find dry wood to cook a meal with.

It was just cold enough to make them feel the necessity of wearing the buckskin gloves they were provided with, but they generally rode with the right hand bare for all that.

Young Wild West did not want to be surprised and be hampered with any glove on the hand that he did the most of his shooting with.

A gloved hand cannot handle a revolver as easily as a bare one can.

They rested a little less than an hour and then resumed the journey.

The only persons they had met since the start were a party of prospectors, who had been driven in by the snowstorm.

They inquired for the nearest town, and our friends of course directed them to Weston.

The men were very glad to hear that they were so near to civilization, for they were pretty well used up, as far as supplies went, and they, as well as their horses, presented rather a sorry appearance.

Since our friends had passed the fork that went to Spauldicks they had not seen a track in the snow.

They were the first to go that way since the snowfall.

The snow had not drifted much, so they could make pretty good headway, and just as the sun was going down they came to the spot Wild had calculated to camp at for the night.

It was a snug enough retreat not over a rod from the trail, and it was so situated that they would be well protected from the chilling winds, and in case a storm came up the fury of it could not reach them.

All five started to clear away a spot for their purpose, and in a short time they had just what they wanted.

Two tents were soon pitched close together and the ground beneath them spread with pine boughs.

Then a roaring fire was started in front of them, after which the horses were fed.

By the time they were ready to cook their supper it was pitch dark.

Jack Robedee and Delaney volunteered to do the cooking, and they showed how well they knew their business by putting up a really appetizing meal.

"We will turn out in the morning and look out for bear tracks," said Cheyenne Charlie, who was a lover of bear meat. "If I don't shoot a grizzly before breakfast I'll consider that I'm a mighty poor hunter."

Wild was careful enough to appoint guards for the night.

He knew that they were pretty close to the place where the hostile Indians held forth, and, besides, there was no telling when a band of lawless whites might come along and make trouble for them.

But the night passed without their being disturbed.

As soon as he was able to see ten feet ahead of him Cheyenne Charlie was up looking for bear tracks.

Young Wild West followed him, thinking that he, too, might get a shot at the big game.

When Charlie turned off to the left, he went to the right.

About five minutes later he heard the report of the scout's rifle, and he knew that he had been successful.

"Charlie was always lucky at hunting bears," he muttered. "I guess I'll run over and see what he shot."

He started in the direction the report had come from, and he had not covered over twenty yards when he came upon the trail of a man.

Wild stood stock still in his tracks, for he knew that the footprints had not been made by any one in his party.

Just then a rifle shot rang out and a bullet whizzed past his head.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRAIRIE IS REACHED.

Young Wild West quickly dodged behind a crag for cover. He did not want to be a target for any one.

But as he did so he cast his eye in the direction the shot had come from, and caught sight of the smoke of the rifle curling upward.

"An enemy!" he exclaimed, under his breath. "Well, now the thing is to find out whether he is white or red."

The footprints in the snow were made by heavy boots, but that was nothing to go by, as an Indian was almost as liable to have boots on as a white man.

Wild simply laid low and kept his eye fixed upon the point where he had seen the smoke.

Suddenly he saw a rifle barrel slide out and point in his direction.

His own rifle was close against the side of a rock, and taking a quick aim, he pressed the trigger.

As the report rang out, he had the satisfaction of seeing the rifle drop downward into the gully below.

He had fired with the intention of hitting the man who held the weapon, hoping the bullet would strike the barrel and glance in the right direction.

Whether he had succeeded or not he could not say, as the fact of his hitting the rifle was sufficient to knock it from the grasp of the one who held it.

Wild waited for perhaps five minutes, and then hearing or seeing nothing, walked boldly into view and started to follow the footsteps in the snow.

But he kept a sharp watch, however, and the first glimpse he got of a stranger would mean that individual's death.

The daring boy had not gone half a dozen yards when he heard the voice of Cheyenne Charlie calling him.

Then two shots rang out from the direction of the camp.

Wild hardly knew which way to go.

But he decided to go in Charlie's direction, as it might be that he was in trouble.

The boy now set out on a run, but before he had gone far he met Charlie hurrying for the camp.

"What is the matter?" asked the scout.

"There is some one around who don't like us, I guess," replied our hero.

The next minute they came in sight of the camp.

Jack Robedee was there all alone, standing on guard with his rifle ready for instant use.

When he saw Wild and Charlie his eyes lighted with pleasure.

"So you are all right?" he asked. "I am glad of that. Jim an' Delaney are chasin' a feller who looked like a half-breed, or greaser, or somethin'."

"The fellow who shot at me, I guess," answered Wild. "I shot the rifle out of his hands. It was the best I could do, as I could not see any part of him when I fired."

"An' Jim an' Delaney shot at him with their revolvers when he was sneakin' along an' wouldn't halt when we told him. Delaney said he thought he knowed the feller."

Wild and Charlie waited to hear no more. They hurried along the trail in the snow left by Jim and the messenger from the fort.

In less than two minutes they came in sight of them returning.

"He reached his horse and got away," said Jim. "We couldn't get a shot at him because he got behind the rocks, and when we next caught sight of him he had mounted and was out of range of our revolvers. That is where I made a mistake in leaving my rifle behind me when I started after him."

"It is too bad he got away," observed Delaney, shaking his head. "He is a dangerous customer. He was with the band of stragglers that came so near finishing me the day before yesterday. He is a half-breed named Joe Antelope."

"What!" exclaimed our hero. "No wonder he was so anxious to drop me, then! Why, I had a little muss with him over at Brown's Gazoo yesterday morning. I got the drop on him, and he put up his gun and walked away, telling me who he was, and that he would meet me again. Well, I am glad he is not a good shot, for if he was he would have wound up my career a little while ago. Joe Antelope, eh? Well, I will attend to his case the next time I set eyes on him."

"He has been hanging around Fort Smith all the fall," said Delaney. "He is a regular sneak thief, and two weeks ago he got his orders to quit the place. I suppose he has joined Running Fox's gang. There was a white man with him when the Indians gave me my close call. I wonder what has become of him."

"He is dead and buried back in Weston," Wild answered. "The half-breed shot the white man over a dispute in a game of cards, and that was how I got in trouble with him yester-

day morning. It looks to me as though they followed you into Weston."

"By Jove! I never thought of that before. It is a lucky thing they did not find me asleep the night before last, like you did," and he turned to Cheyenne Charlie and shrugged his shoulders as he thought of what surely would have happened to him had such been the case.

"We might catch him before night, as it is quite likely he will make straight for the foothills," remarked Wild, after a pause. "We must have no mercy on the scoundrel. The first one who sees him will draw a bead on him."

Jack now turned to the breakfast again, and Charlie called to Wild to follow him.

"I shot a fine young cinnamon bear," he said. "Just help me cut off the haunches, will you? I want a good feed of him for my dinner."

"All right," was the reply. "The meat will be just right by dinner time, and I think I can relish a steak myself."

The bear was soon skinned, and while Charlie was dressing it in shape, Wild cut off the meat they wanted to take from the carcass.

"This skin will come in handy," said the scout. "We can't tell what use we might want to put it to. One thing, it will keep out a whole lot of cold if the weather changes for the worse."

Half an hour later all hands had put away a fairly good breakfast, and then they set out on their journey again.

They caught the trail of Joe Antelope as soon as they got out on the road.

An examination showed that the villain had been following them from Weston.

"We are sure to get him," said Jim. "So I suppose there is no real hurry about it. His horse's tracks are the only ones in the snow. It will be as easy as corraling a jack-rabbit."

Even Wild, who was never too sure of anything, was willing to agree with him on this.

The five rode along at a good pace, and when noon came they halted at a convenient spot and built a fire to cook the bear steaks.

By the looks of the tracks, the half-breed was not far ahead.

But there was no chance for him to get a shot at them, as the country was open all around them for a distance more than a rifle shot away.

Cheyenne Charlie's steaks were certainly fine, and they went at them with a relish.

When they had finished eating they got ready to resume their journey at once.

They were now among the foothills, and it behooved them to be very careful.

There was no telling what moment they might come upon a band of Indians or white renegades.

The weather kept clear, and it was warmer down near the level country and rolling prairie.

About three o'clock in the afternoon they suddenly came upon something which certainly relieved the monotony of their journey.

A band of perhaps a dozen Indians suddenly appeared off to the right and came galloping toward them, yelling like the fiends they were.

Fortunately there were plenty of boulders for our friends to get behind, and at a word from Young Wild West they dismounted.

Delaney acted as though he thought it better to make a running fight of it, but he did not know Young Wild West.

There were five of them and a dozen Indians.

That made the odds against them, as far as numbers went.

But the five whites had the advantage, because they had the boulders to shelter them from the bullets of the reds.

The approaching fiends began to send scattering shots at them now, and Wild thought it high time to answer them.

"Now, then, let them have it!" he cried.

Five rifle reports rang out, blending almost into one, and four Indians threw up their hands and fell from their ponies.

Some one had missed, or else two bullets had found the same mark.

"Again!" cried our hero. "Give it to them before they can wheel and get away."

Four more dropped, leaving only four in the saddle.

"Some one has missed," said Jim.

"I guess it is me," spoke up George Delaney. "I am not a very good shot, anyway."

"It don't matter who it was," observed Wild. "We have dropped three-fourths of them without so much as having a bullet come within a foot of us. You see that fellow in the lead for cover?"

"Oh, yes," answered the cavalryman.

"Well, just keep your eye on him for a couple of seconds. It is a long shot, but I am going to try and make it."

Young Wild West raised his rifle to his shoulder and took a quick, careful aim.

Crack!

As the report rang out Delaney uttered a cry of surprise.

Wild's aim had been true, and the leading horse was now riderless.

"All but three!" exclaimed our hero. "Well, let them go. Probably the lesson they have received has been a good one. I might be able to bring down another of them, but I guess that will do for the present."

Our friends now mounted and rode to the southeast, leaving the Indians the chance to pick up their dead and capture the riderless horses.

They had now reached the commencement of the level prairie.

The snow was not over three inches deep here, and was melting all the time.

Wild and the rest had been riding without gloves ever since noon.

But as night approached it grew colder again, and they began to look for a good place to halt.

There was a good twelve hours' ride ahead of them yet, and they knew that they were in a dangerous part of the country now.

It was Wild's idea to halt when it got dark and take about three hours' rest.

Then they would go on again and reach the fort some time the following morning.

"The Cheyenne River lies off to the left," he said. "I think I can see the glimmer of it in the distance. There is timber over there, too, so we had better make for it."

This remark was received with a great degree of satisfaction, and the horses were turned in the direction Wild indicated.

The sun had just started to sink below the horizon when they came near enough to see a thick grove of trees on the bank of a river.

The stream was the lower fork of the Cheyenne, and it wound its crooked way until it finally emptied into the waters of the Missouri many miles to the north and eastward.

When our friends reached the little timber spot they found it to be a first-class place to pitch their camp.

CHAPTER V.

YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE COMANCHE CHIEF.

The first thing our friends did after dismounting was to look about for a suitable place to make a fire.

It was necessary that they should hide it as much as possi-

ble, as they were now almost in the heart of the portion of the country the Comanche chief used for his hunting and fighting grounds.

Being experienced Indian trailers, they knew exactly how to go at it.

A spot was found beside a fallen tree and the dry fagots piled in it to make the fire with.

But before lighting it they cut a lot of cedar brush and piled it all around, so as to shut off all signs of the blaze they would soon have going.

Wild and the cavalryman were keeping a watch while this was being done, for while the three surviving Indians of the party who had attacked them had not come in that direction, it was possible that there were more about.

As soon as the fire got to burning good, Robedee saw to it that the blaze was kept down as much as possible, and then the coffee and meat were soon cooked.

After this was done some heavy pieces were thrown on the coals, so as to keep it as warm as possible during their stay there.

After supper Jim Dart took it into his head to climb one of the tallest of the trees.

It occurred to him that there might be an Indian camp in sight.

And if there was he would stand a pretty good chance of seeing it from a tree-top.

When he reached one of the highest branches of the tree he took a good look around in all directions.

Pretty soon he noticed a faint glimmer of light in another little growth of timber something like a mile below them on the river bank.

As he looked at it he soon came to the conclusion that it was a campfire that was being concealed from view, the same as their own.

But the parties who had made the fire had not figured on any one spying upon them from the top of a tree.

As it was, the fire was pretty well hidden, and many a man would not have noticed it at all.

But Jim was looking for just that sort of a fire.

If he had expected to see one blazing up regardless he would not have taken the trouble to climb a tree to look for it.

For fully five minutes he kept a sharp watch on the glimmering light, and during that time he plainly made out the shadows of forms as they went past it back and forth at irregular intervals.

"Indians, as sure as I am alive!" the boy shouted, as he started to descend the tree. "I must tell Wild."

It did not take him long to get down, and calling our hero aside, he said:

"Indians, Wild!"

"Where?"

"About a mile below us on the bank of the river."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes; I saw the camp from the top of the tree."

"And you could see their fire?"

"Yes; and see them moving back and forth past it. It may be that they are not reds, but I think they are. They have got their fire hidden as nicely as we have, and I doubt if it could be seen two hundred yards away from the level ground."

"Well, I will take a little scout down that way and see who they are. You can tell the rest where I have gone. If you hear a shot you will know I am in trouble."

Wild started off without any further talk, and though Jim would have liked to accompany him, he did not say so.

He felt that Young Wild West knew what he was doing when he started off alone.

Anyhow, one would be less apt to be discovered than two.

Wild handed his rifle to Jim before he started.

He had his brace of trusty revolvers with him, and he knew they would answer his purpose if he happened to get into trouble and be compelled to fight at close quarters.

He knew that he must proceed with the utmost caution, since the snow on the ground would betray him very quickly.

But fortunately there was a growth of bushes and weeds all along the bank of the river.

The majority of the weeds had been broken down by the storms of the autumn and the early winter, but they would just answer his purpose.

Wild kept along at a fairly good pace, dodging here and there in order to keep his form hidden, and finally coming to an abrupt halt when about half the distance had been covered.

The cause of his coming to an abrupt halt was that he suddenly came upon a trail through the snow.

It had been made by a pair of moccasined feet, and the toes pointed obliquely in the direction Wild had come from.

That meant the Indian, for Indian it certainly was, had started in the direction of the camp of our friends.

Wild crouched in the shadow of a bush and remained quiet for the space of half a minute.

He had an idea that the redskin who made those tracks was not far away.

And in that case it was quite likely that he was aware of the white boy's presence.

Wild did not become the least bit nervous.

He felt that he was the equal of any Indian who had ever breathed.

Revolver in hand, he simply awaited developments.

And he had not long to wait.

"Ugh! What paleface do here?"

The guttural voice came from directly behind him, and as quick as a flash he turned and had the speaker covered.

Before him stood the most imposing Indian chief he had ever looked upon.

He held a rifle in his hands, but had made no attempt to level it at Young Wild West.

"Paleface boy no shoot," he said, calmly. "Me want to talk to him. Maybe he is a friend of Running Fox."

Wild could easily have shot the bold warrior dead in his tracks, but he was not inclined to do so.

The chief could have killed him before calling to him, had he so desired, and our hero was not the one to kill a man for sparing his life.

"Chief," said Wild, lowering his revolver, "I am not a friend of Running Fox, or any other chief, for that matter. What are you doing here?"

"Me come to meet you," was the reply.

"Well?"

"You Young Wild West. You go to fort to see soldiers, then you try to find Running Fox and take his scalp. Running Fox know you come, so he come out to meet you."

Wild was not a little surprised to hear this.

So it was the Comanche chief himself, then.

The crafty rascal met him half way.

"So I have the pleasure of talking to the great chief Running Fox, have I?" resumed the boy.

"Yes; me Running Fox. Me come to meet you to tell you to go back; no bother with Indians; no listen to soldiers at fort; go back and dig gold in the mountains."

The only way Wild could guess how he knew so much was that the half-breed, Joe Antelope, must have told him.

He looked at the chief in silence for a moment.

Running Fox was certainly a magnificent specimen of his race.

He was almost a giant, and the fiercest of his race.

and the huge red blanket with a smattering of fur sewed on it over and there gave him a really picturesque appearance.

He had one of the latest breech-loading army rifles in his hands, and in his belt were a brace of revolvers, a keen-edged hunting-knife and an old-fashioned tomahawk that was evidently an heirloom, as its appearance would indicate.

"I will not go back to dig gold in the mountains till Running Fox and his band have been either driven away from the settlements, or punished!" Wild exclaimed, in a slow, measured tone, so the chief would be able to understand every word of it.

"Young Wild West heap big fool! Good-night!" and without another word the chief stalked off in the direction of his camp.

Wild watched his departing form until it was lost in the darkness.

There was only one thing to do now, and that was to go back to camp.

He felt that it would not be right for him to spy upon the camp of the Comanche chief, after what had just happened.

Running Fox had given him a show, and the best thing he could do was to get his companions ready and make for Fort Smith, so as to report to the general as soon as possible.

After that he must bring all his strategy to bear to outwit the cunning Comanche and end the raids of his dreaded band.

Wild hurried back and soon reached the camp.

"How did you make out?" asked Jim.

"First rate. I met the dreaded chief of the Comanches and mixed tribes and had a talk with him," was the reply.

"What!" gasped his five hearers in a breath.

"I am telling you the truth. But, come, we must get away from here as soon as possible. We are liable to be attacked at any moment now."

All hands flew to their horses, and in an exceedingly short space of time they had them ready to mount.

"Head direct for the fort," said Wild to George Delaney.

"See here, Wild," cried Jim, impatiently, "tell us what you meant when you said you had a talk with Running Fox, the Comanche chief."

"I meant just what I said. I was making good headway toward the camp you located from the top of the tree, and just as I was about half way to it I suddenly came upon foot-prints leading this way. I laid low, and the next minute an Indian called me from behind."

"Called you, instead of shooting or knifing you!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie in amazement.

"Yes; that is just what he did. He might have shot me easily enough; but if it had come to knives I rather think he would have failed. He called me by name, and told me he had come to meet me, just as though he knew I was sneaking toward his camp."

"Oh, well, I suppose that half-breed fellow has told him how near we were behind him, and the shrewd old chief has taken it for granted that you would be looking for him," said Jim.

This seemed to be the proper explanation to the puzzle, so no one offered anything different.

"He told me to go back to the mountains and dig gold," Wild resumed; "also that I should not bother with the soldiers at the fort, and let him and his people alone."

"And what did you tell him?" Jack queried.

"I told him that I would not go back to the mountains to dig gold till Running Fox was driven away from the settlements or punished."

"And I suppose he told you that you were a fool."

"Yes; a heap big fool."

"Well, if you had let him have a bullet right between the eyes just about then he'd have known who the heap big fool was."

"I could not do that," was the reply. "He treated me right, and I felt that I was bound to treat him the same. If I had shot him when he stood there before me, or when he turned to walk away, I would have felt myself a heartless murderer. The next time we meet it will be different, perhaps."

Meanwhile, let us follow the Comanche chief back to his camp.

Straight as an arrow, and with an appearance that was really majestic, he went, until presently he came to a sentry stationed outside the confines of the camp.

One word in the Indian tongue, and he was at once recognized.

Running Fox stalked up to the biggest fire in the place, for there were two of them, in spite of the fact that Jim Dart had only seen one from the top of the tree.

There were more than three hundred braves in that camp, too—all tough, hardy redskins, well tempered to the cold weather.

A circle of brushwood had been piled high in the air around each fire, and that was why the light could not be seen.

As the big chief approached the larger of the fires a couple of braves moved the brushwood so he could get inside the circle.

Then it was that he gave orders to throw aside all the brushwood, and no longer keep the position of the camp a secret.

"Did I tell Running Fox the truth?" asked an ugly-faced half-breed, rising up from the fire.

It was no other than Joe Antelope. He had arrived at the Indian camp shortly before sunset and had given a full report of how he had followed the messenger from the fort to Weston, and how he had learned his mission; also that Young Wild West and four others were hot on his trail.

"Joe Antelope's tongue is not crooked," replied the chief. "What he said is true. Running Fox met Young Wild West and talked to him. The Medicine Man's tongue is straight, too."

As the Comanche said this he looked at the greasy looking old Indian with a wrinkled visage, who was enveloped in a pair of army blankets.

"Oak Heart, the big medicine man, is glad that his chief is satisfied."

This was said with considerable gesticulation and airs of importance, and then the medicine man lapsed into deep silence again.

Perhaps he was crafty enough to know that the more mysterious he behaved the more stock the chief would take in him.

But he was, in truth, placed in a rather peculiar position.

Running Fox had killed a medicine man only the week before, because he had failed to foresee something to his full satisfaction, and a similar fate awaited Oak Heart if he made too many mistakes.

If an Indian medicine man cures three cases out of twenty, or predicts three events out of fifty he is considered a great man, and is bound to be in high favor with his chief.

The fact that Oak Heart had told Running Fox that a young paleface was coming toward the camp that night had set him right with the chief, because it had come to pass.

And this had been very easy for the medicine man to do, since he had heard all Joe Antelope had to say concerning Young Wild West.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HALF-BREED'S PATIENCE.

Joe Antelope, the half-breed, was a very venomous wretch. He now hated Young Wild West worse than poison, because of the manner in which the handsome young fellow had treated him.

When he was out of Brown's Gazoo he mounted his horse, but did not ride out of town.

He was so anxious to get a chance to be revenged that he was going to stay around there a while.

He went into the saloon that was located farthest from the Gazoo and ordered a drink.

Flannigan was the name of the man who kept the place.

He was one of the sort who try to make out that they always mind their own business, when in reality they are always meddling in a secret way with some one else's business.

Flannigan did not like Young Wild West, but he took pains not to say so to any one.

He was afraid that it would reach the ears of the young prince of the saddle, and then he might get into trouble with him.

It so happened that when Joe Antelope came in the rascally saloon-keeper was thinking of Wild, and he was thinking hard, too.

One of his cronies had told him that Young Wild West had said he thought there was something crooked about the alleged hotel he ran.

"I wish that upstart of a boy would mind his own business," he thought. "If it was not for him I'd have a chance to make double the money I do here. There is lots of chances to dope strangers when they're drunk an' take what money an' valuables they have got. But I daren't do anything like that, jest for fear Young Wild West should hear about it. An' if he was to hear any such thing about my place it would be good-by to Flannigan."

That was exactly what was running through the mind of the man when Joe Antelope entered.

The looks of the half-breed were enough to convince Flannigan that he was an out-and-out villain of the first water.

The proprietor of the place always took a liking to strangers of this sort.

"How are you, stranger?" he observed, when Joe Antelope drained his glass. "We've had quite a little snowfall, ain't we?"

"Yes," was the reply. "Give me another drink, an' have one yourself."

"I'll go yer. I always like to drink with strangers, especially them what I take a notion to."

This compliment was not lost on the half-breed, and a look of pleasure crossed his ugly countenance.

"Have another drink," he said.

"Not until you have a good cigar with me. Where did you come from, my friend?"

"Oh, I've been hangin' around Fort Smith a little of late. I had to come over here on business, an' I stopped in that hotel close to ther post-office. I had a little bad luck over there, so I thought I'd drop in here."

"Gamblin', was yer?"

"Yes; but that wasn't it exactly. I shot a man who was with me, 'cause he was tryin' to cheat me, when I'd always used him right; and then a boy they call Young Wild West, he make me put away my revolver. He going to shoot me if I no do it. Me Joe Antelope, an' me no like that."

"I shouldn't think you would like it. Young Wild West is no together for fiddle anyway. He knows how to handle a gun,

an' he knows how to do it quick, too. He's got more nerve than any one I ever seen; but, jest ther same, there's a whole lot of folks around here what don't like him."

The half-breed's eyes flashed when he heard this.

"Me no like him," he said. "Me kill him before two days."

"Well," and the rascally proprietor lowered his voice and made sure that no one else in the room heard him, "ther sooner he drops out, ther better it will be for ther majority of ther people in Weston."

"Me kill him. Me come all ther way from Fort Smith to kill him. Me sorry that I shot friend with me, but he no business to cheat at cards."

A couple of miners came in just then and stood close to where Joe Antelope was talking to Flannigan, and noticing that they were bound to interrupt the conversation, the half-breed scowled at them and moved from them.

The miners were both very friendly to Young Wild West, and they had been in the Gazoo when Wild had so neatly got the turn on the half-breed scoundrel.

One of them had been drinking more than was good for him, and noticing the scowl, he blurted out:

"What's ther matter, you measly coyote? I thought Young Wild West learned yer how to behave while yer was in Weston."

He drew his revolver as he said this, and Joe Antelope did likewise.

Then the two men glared at each other for the space of ten seconds without saying a word.

"Well!" the miner finally said. "Why don't yer shoot?"

Crack!

The villain did shoot.

He was too quick for the miner, and the poor fellow sank to the floor.

His companion flashed his shooter and fired to avenge the sudden death of his friend, but the bullet simply grazed Joe Antelope's head and broke the only mirror that was behind the bar.

Then the half-breed answered the shot and also missed, though the distance was less than a dozen feet.

He thought it time for him to get out, then, for he expected he would be made a sieve of by the men in the place if he stayed.

Out of the door he sprang, and mounting his waiting horse, rode away with the speed of the wind.

Two or three shots were fired after him by the friend of his victim, but they went wide of the mark and he was soon out of range.

Joe Antelope felt somewhat pacified when he had ridden about three miles.

He had expressed himself to a man in Weston as to what he thought of Young Wild West, and that was something.

"They don't none of 'em know that I came over on purpose to keep Young Wild West from running down Running Fox," he muttered. "That Comanche chief is just as sharp as ther soldiers at ther fort, an' though ther man they sent here after Young Wild West got here all right, he won't git back. Me Joe Antelope, an' me know what me talk about."

The man could speak the English language fairly well, but he had a way of talking in the semi-broken way of the Indians at times.

When he was real mad or excited he forgot his English all the more.

When he was quite sure that no one had started in pursuit of him the villain slackened his pace.

He felt it his duty now to put Young Wild West out of the way before he got upon the trail of Running Fox, and he was thinking of a way to do it.

He did not want to attempt it openly.

That would be running too much of a risk.

As thick as he was, Joe Antelope at last figured out what he had better do.

He knew if he continued on his way the tracks of his horse would be seen in the snow by Young Wild West and his party when they came along on their way to the fort.

So he concluded to stop and wait till they had passed as soon as he reached a spot where there was no longer any trail.

And it was not until he reached the fork of the road where one road led to Spondulicks and the other went to the open prairie the other side of the mountain range, that it occurred to him that he had better lay over and wait for his enemies—he called them his enemies, anyway—to pass.

The man had nothing to eat with him, and he did not know how long he might have to wait for Young Wild West to come along, so he began to look for some game.

Bears were plentiful, and it was not long before he noticed bear tracks pretty close to the edge of the road.

Then he dismounted, and, rifle in hand, he followed the tracks.

In a few minutes he came upon the bear, and with a well-directed shot from his rifle he laid the animal low.

Then, as he looked around, he saw a cave that would answer admirably for a place to camp until those he was waiting for came along.

The spot was elevated sufficiently for him to have a look at the road a few hundred feet away, and a cave that would shield him from the rather keen wind was right there.

With a nod of satisfaction he proceeded to skin the bear.

When this was accomplished he cut off some of the steaks and led his horse to the cave.

Joe Antelope had one of the old-fashioned Mexican saddles, and the bags attached to it were of great capacity.

And he had them stuffed with oats for his horse, and coffee and sugar and salt for himself.

"Me stay right here until Young Wild West come," he muttered.

Then he gathered together a supply of wood and built a fire at the mouth of the cave, after first making sure that the blaze would not be apt to be seen from the road.

As much of a scoundrel as he was, the half-breed never neglected his horse, and after making the animal as comfortable as he could, he set about cooking something to eat.

While he was doing all this, Joe Antelope was casting furtive glances out of the cave now and then.

He was not sure whether Young Wild West was going to start for Fort Smith that day or the next morning.

But, in any event, he was going to wait till he went past.

Then he would follow him up and shoot him at the first opportunity.

With the greatest of patience the villain waited, and by and by when the shades of night began to gather he gave up watching.

He felt almost certain that those he was watching for would not pass until the next morning.

With plenty of wood and plenty of bear meat, the half-breed was content to wait there in the cave, and wait he did.

The next morning he had the satisfaction of seeing Young Wild West ride past on his way to help put down Running Fox, the Comanche chief.

But there were four with him, and when he saw them Joe Antelope scratched his head.

"Me no afraid of soldier from the fort, but me no like other men," he said to himself. "Too many to sneak up on an' grab by the back. Must shoot Young Wild West, an' then ride away like the lightning's flash."

A few minutes later he started in pursuit.

He had a long ride ahead of him, and he calculated that he must wait till night to do his cowardly act, as he must get past our friends before doing it, so he could ride on.

If he could report to Running Fox that Young Wild West, the great scout the general at the fort wanted, was dead, he would be in high favor with the great chief.

The half-breed hoped that better luck was in store for him than he had had thus far.

He and his partner had been with the Indian band that chased George Delaney.

If they had shot the messenger from the fort there would have been no need of following him up.

It was not the wish of Running Fox to have the messenger shot, as he wanted to learn what the message was that he was on.

But when Joe Antelope learned by hanging around the fort what the messenger was to be sent to Weston for he took it on himself to shoot him.

But he had failed to do it, and thus it was that he and his partner had followed the cavalryman all the way into Weston.

And then the ugly half-breed had shot the man who had stuck to him on the journey through the snow.

Now there was only one thing that would appease the desire for revenge in the breast of Joe Antelope.

He must slay Young Wild West before he reported to the chief, Running Fox.

But Joe Antelope did not know what he had ahead of him.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAPTURE OF A MAIDEN.

Shortly after Young Wild West and his friends resumed their journey to Fort Smith the moon came up.

As the silvery gleams fell upon the snow-covered ground the scene became almost as light as day.

It was barely cold enough to freeze, too, and that made it all the more pleasant for the hurried ride across the prairie.

Wild was on the alert for a pursuit, for he thought it quite likely that Running Fox would send out a party to kill or capture them.

But when half an hour had slipped by, and there was no sign of anything like pursuit, he began to think that everything was all right.

About midnight they paused for a short rest on the bank of the river.

The moon had temporarily gone behind a cloud and the night was as still as death.

Suddenly the rapid discharge of firearms rang out to the east of them on the opposite side of the river.

Instantly our friends were all attention.

Crack, crack! Crack, crack, crack! Cra-a-a-ek!

It seemed to be a veritable fusillade that was being fired, and it was less than half a mile away where it was all taking place.

"We must cross the river, boys!" exclaimed Wild. "It may be that we are needed."

At that instant the warwhoop of a band of Indians could be heard, telling them that the red fiends were getting the best of the battle.

It did not take our friends more than five minutes to find a shoal place in the river, and then they crossed in a hurry.

Then on a wild gallop they set out for the scene of the conflict.

As the moon showed again they beheld a cloud of dense smoke in the distance, and at irregular intervals there showed from this flashes of fire.

Young Wild West's spirited horse pricked up his ears as

he scented the smoke of the battle, and in spite of the fact that his rider tried to hold him back, he was in the lead by a dozen yards almost immediately.

Wild had unslung his rifle and he was but waiting to render assistance to the whites who were being attacked by the Indians.

He was quite sure that there were not two bands of Indians fighting. If he had thought anything like that he would not have been so anxious to reach the scene.

In three minutes' time after crossing the river our hero was close enough to see what was taking place.

He could see that a wagon train was hemmed in on all sides by Indians.

The gallant band of whites were putting up a noble fight, but they were outnumbered five to one, and unless help came very soon it would be all over with them.

Wild took a sheer off to the left and opened fire.

At every shot a red demon fell, and when Jim and the rest took a hand in the shooting the aspect took a sudden change.

Realizing that help had come, the whites put on an extra effort.

With a resounding cheer they met the Indians hand-to-hand and forced them back.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

Young Wild West and his friends were mowing the redskins down like grain, and when each had fired half a dozen shots the Indians beat a retreat and galloped off over the prairie.

"Whoopee!" yelled Cheyenne Charlie, who was right in his element. "Here we come, boys! Clear the track for Young Wild West!"

At this a rousing cheer went up from the survivors of the attack.

The majority of them had heard the name of Young Wild West, and now they knew of him personally.

They poured a last volley into the retreating band of red men, and then turned to welcome the new arrivals.

"Gee whiz!" exclaimed Punch Joline, the old guide. "Yer don't mean ter say that there's only five of yer! Didn't you fellows make them copper-skinned demons scoot! Hello, Young Wild West! Hello, Jim! How are you, Cheyenne Charlie? You're good for sore eyes, Jack! Blowed if I ain't glad to see yer all!"

The old man rushed up and was not satisfied until he had shaken each of the four by the hands.

He knew them all from the time they lived at Fort Bridger.

There were only a dozen men living out of the seventeen who had been attacked, and as they crowded around to pay their respects to Young Wild West and his friends a cry of alarm suddenly came from the wagons, where the women had sought safety during the fight.

A young girl by the name of Mollie Hampton was missing.

No one knew where she was, but it was taken for granted that she had been carried off by the Indians.

The thickest of the hand-to-hand fight had been right close to the wagons.

Instantly the greatest excitement prevailed.

The girl was very pretty, and a general favorite with all her acquaintances.

The thought that she was in the power of the cruel redskins was enough to make the men's blood boil.

Her mother had fainted dead away and there were others of the females who were ready to swoon.

The joy over the arrival of Young Wild West was now turned to sorrow.

"Calm yourselves—all of you! I will try to save the girl!" cried Wild.

His words had great effect on the people.

They put the utmost faith in him.

These people had lived in a little village along the border line of the State of Nebraska, and the Indians under the command of Running Fox had raided the place, forcing them to flee for their lives.

The Comanche chief had kept up the fight for a day and a night, and how they had managed to get away with a few belongings was indeed a miracle.

They were making for Fort Smith for protection.

Up to this night they had been lucky in not meeting any of the roving bands of Indians, but it had come at last, and now five men had been killed and a beautiful maiden carried off by the demons.

Only that morning a troop of cavalymen had passed them and told them the way to the fort was clear.

But it had not turned out to be true.

Young Wild West felt deeply moved about the girl being carried off.

He felt that he must try and rescue her.

Though he had agreed to report as soon as possible to the general at the fort, he felt that the girl came in ahead of that.

"You people, make right ahead for the fort," he said to the men. "I don't think you will be bothered any more. You will get there before noon to-morrow. Tell the commander to send a force to look us up, as I expect to run the Comanche chief down and make the raid he made upon your village his last."

"I'll tell him every word you say, Young Wild West," answered Punch Joline, the guide. "I'll give him to understand that I know that you'll do just as you say you will, too. From what I've heard, you never failed to do anything you undertook yet."

"I am going with you, if you have no objection, Wild," said George Delaney. "I know the proper thing to do would be to report as soon as possible, but I want to go with you real bad."

"Well, suppose I say that it is necessary that you should go with us, then?"

"I wish you would."

"Well, I do say so. Now, not another moment's delay!"

The five dashed away hot on the trail of the band of Indians, leaving the men of the wagon train placing their dead in a wagon in order to resume their journey.

The Indians must have numbered about forty, and they had a good ten minutes' start.

Wild felt certain that they would make for the camp of Running Fox on the banks of the Cheyenne River, so he concluded to make a shorter cut than they had taken.

He was very quick to figure such things out.

Indians are great on following a trail.

They are sure that they will get where they want to go, then, especially if their own people have made it, as in this case.

Wild felt that by proceeding in a straight line, instead of following the course of the river after it was reached, they could cut off three or four miles.

He hoped by doing this that they could get ahead of the band and surprise them from ambush and rescue the girl.

This would be all right, providing they were not too close to the camp of Running Fox at the time.

If the shooting could be heard in his camp there would be a regular horde upon them in no time.

The extra horse they had with them impeded their progress somewhat, but they managed to ride as fast as the Indians had, for all that.

As soon as they forded the river they made for the camp

of the Comanche chief in a direct line, as near as Wild could tell.

With the moon to guide them they kept on their way on the center so common to saddle horses.

It was an mitering gait, almost, for a horse can keep it up for hours.

When they had been riding for a little more than an hour Wild concluded to draw in a little toward the river, thinking that it was just probable that they had not got ahead of the band.

The Indian camp was now not much more than five miles distant.

They shot off at right angles and rapidly neared the river.

When they were near enough to see the silvery moonlight shining on its surface, they came to a halt to listen.

"We must be ahead of them," said Wild. "I think we had better ride over to that clump of trees and wait."

"Horses coming!" cried Jim.

"That's it!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie.

They had scarcely got beneath the shadow of the trees when they heard the sound of horses' hoofs in the distance.

"Here they come!" whispered Delaney, his eyes glowing with excitement. "Let us be careful and not shoot the girl."

"That is something we have got to look out for," answered Wild. "Don't any of you press a trigger till you have a red-skin covered. You can easily tell where the girl is, for one of them will have her on his horse ahead of him."

Nearer and nearer came the galloping horses.

Our friends tried to catch a glimpse of the approaching band, but owing to the trees and bushes that fringed the river bank, they were unable to do so.

Right at the edge of the trees the five sat, their rifles ready for instant use.

In ten seconds more, it seemed, the band must come into view.

Suddenly Young Wild West gave a start.

"By jove!" he cried. "They have got the best of us, after all! They have not crossed the river!"

This was indeed the truth, as they quickly found out when they rode down to the water's edge.

The Indians were on the other side of the stream and were rapidly being lost to sight behind a piece of timber.

CHAPTER VIII.

JIM DART IS SORELY PUZZLED.

"We are dished!" exclaimed Young Wild West. "We cannot ford the river here. It is too deep and is full of floating ice."

"What will we do, then?" asked Cheyenne Charlie.

"Simply follow them on this side of the river at a safe distance. We will go as close to the camp as possible, and then stop and decide on a plan of action. One thing, they will not harm the girl until they get her to the village, which must be in the neighborhood of a hundred miles from here. We must depend strictly upon strategy now, as it would take a whole regiment of soldiers to put up any kind of a fight against them."

"And that is just what they will have to buck against—a whole regiment," remarked Delaney. "The general will send them out as soon as your message reaches the fort."

"If Running Fox becomes aware of that he will move for his village or to the hills where Sitting Bull is."

It was Jim Dart who said this.

"I don't know about that," returned the cavalryman. "They were hurried off our men so much of late that they have got on such a bad track as to be unreliable."

"You never can believe if they think that way," said Wild.

"Now, then, let us ride on. We will stop at the place we camped at to-night, and if there are signs of any of the Indians having been there we will put up there for the night. When I come to think of it, I guess it is about as good a place as any."

They were not a great while in reaching the spot, and then, as Wild had expected, they found the footprints of Indians all around the place.

Running Fox had sent some of his men to make sure that our hero had left the vicinity.

Though he had not known exactly where the camp of the whites lay, his braves soon found it.

"This will do nicely," observed the young prince of the saddle. "They won't think we are back here. The party who are going into the camp now with the girl captive will report that it was a large party who drove them away from the wagon train, and we will not be suspected of having taken any part in it. I wouldn't be afraid to bet five hundred dollars that, if the truth could be known, Running Fox thinks we are even now making for Fort Smith."

"I agree with you on that," spoke up Jim. "Are you going to let me go on a little scout with you this time?"

"I'll tell you what I'll do. I want to take time to think a while. I'll stay right here with Charlie and Delaney, and you and Jack can go out and see what you can find out about the camp of the enemy. How does that suit you?"

"Good!"

Delaney said nothing to this, but it was quite evident that he wanted to go, too.

But Wild would not hear to such a thing.

The cavalryman was not sufficiently experienced in woodcraft to go on such a dangerous mission as that.

The horses were tied in the hollow, and then Wild and Delaney covered themselves well with blankets and got down close to the fallen tree where the fire had been.

Cheyenne Charlie had volunteered to stand guard while Jim and Jack were gone, and he started to walk about within the shadow of the trees as soon as they had taken their departure.

Wild did a whole lot of thinking while he was waiting for the two to return, but he could not settle upon any definite plan of action.

The Comanche chief was so shrewd that he was a hard man to buck against.

An hour passed and then Jim Dart came back alone.

He seemed to be worried over something.

"Where is Jack?" asked Wild.

"I don't know," was the reply. "That is what has been puzzling me for the last hour. I thought he might have come back ahead of me."

"How did you come to git apart?" queried Charlie.

"We were not over fifteen feet apart at any time. That's what makes the thing so mysterious. We managed to get a place on the river bank where we could see the camp pretty well. The Indians are not trying to conceal it in the least."

"And you could see all that was going on?"

"Yes; but there wasn't much going on. They have over half a dozen pickets out, and it was no little trouble to get inside the lines, and then out again."

"You are sure Jack did not fall into the hands of the reds?" Wild asked.

"Positive he did not; at least at the time I missed him. He disappeared as though he had been whisked out of sight by a witch. I looked around for him as much as I dared, and then moved away from the place, as one of the guards was walking dangerously close to it."

"Well, it is just possible that Jack went off in another direction, his attention having been attracted by something. We

will wait a while, and then if he does not show up I'll go with you to make a search for him."

This somewhat relieved the mind of Jim.

Somehow he felt that he was responsible for the disappearance of Robedee.

Half an hour passed.

Wild got up.

"Jim," said he, "I want you to lead me to the exact spot where you were when you first missed Jack."

"I'll do my level best to do it," was the reply.

"Come on, then. Leave your rifle behind. We can't be bothered with them on such a trip as this. If we get into trouble we will have to depend on our revolvers and knives to get us out of it."

The two boys left the camp, heading for the Indian encampment, and making their way along under cover of the bushes and weeds that lined the river bank.

Every now and then they would catch a glimpse of the blazing fires ahead of them, and this gave them an idea of how close they were getting.

They were following the trail Jim and Jack had made when they went over an hour and a half before.

The moon had now gone under, and if it had not been for the white shroud of snow on the ground it would have been as dark as pitch.

As it was, they could see their way very well, and a few minutes later they had reached the picket line.

A big buck carrying a rifle, and enveloped in a heavy blanket, was walking back and forth not over twenty yards from them.

Fifty yards to the left there was another one.

The scarcity of the bushes at that point made it a difficult thing for our friends to get inside the lines, but they were not worrying a bit about it.

Every time the backs of the Indians were turned they moved ahead a little.

They had just reached the cover of a thick growth of shrubbery when Jim's knee bore heavy on a piece of dry wood and caused it to crack sharply.

Instantly the nearest guard headed that way.

Wild drew his knife, but Jim placed his hand upon his arm.

"Let me do it," he whispered. "It was my fault."

Out came his keen-edged knife, and he crept around a bush to meet the Indian.

The redskin had his rifle ready for instant use, for he plainly thought that there was something wrong.

He came forward cautiously, peering through the gloom, vainly endeavoring to see what had caused the noise.

Suddenly a form arose before him, and before he could shoot or utter a warning cry his throat was seized in a vise-like grip and a knife was plunged into his heart.

Jim had performed the task his mistake had caused him to be responsible for.

He allowed the burly form of the dead man to drop gently to the ground, and then turned questioning to Wild.

"Let's get that blanket and headgear," our hero said. "We may have to act as an Indian guard—one of us—before we get away from here."

Jim soon handed him the articles.

Wild put them on without any hesitation, and then picking up the dead Indian's rifle, he arose to his feet boldly and began to walk back and forth over the beat he had seen the red man covering.

"You will do," said Jim, when he came back. "I saw that other fellow over there looking at you as though he was going to ask you what you came so far over this way for."

"And if he had I would have answered him."

"Oh, I know that well enough. You can disguise your voice well enough to deceive him, and your knowledge of the Sioux tongue would be bound to pull you through. I can understand the lingo very well, but I am a poor hand to speak it. You beat any white person I ever saw at it."

"Well, you see, practice does a whole lot, and I stuck to it till I had mastered it after once starting in."

"What do you propose to do now?" inquired Jim, as he saw that Wild was winding the blanket about him as though he meant to keep it on him.

"I am going to try and find Jack. Just show me where you last saw him, will you? Somehow, I feel confident that I am going to find him."

"Come on, then. We have got to be mighty cautious."

The conversation had been carried on in very low whispers, and now they cut it short and started toward the camp, which was not more than a hundred yards distant, or rather the outskirts were not more than that far.

It was well toward morning, and nearly every inmate of the camp was sound asleep.

But in addition to the outside pickets there were four redskins walking about the camp with measured tread.

Running Fox was not to be caught napping.

At the approach of the enemy the pickets would give the alarm, and then the guards in the camp would arouse the braves.

Our two daring friends crept forward and were soon behind the trunk of a fallen tree within a dozen yards from the nearest tepee.

"Here is where I last saw Jack," said Jim in a whisper.

He nodded to the left, and Wild at once started to creep that way.

Jim started after him, but at that moment a dog in the Indian camp began to bark savagely.

This caused the boy to drop low behind the log.

The barking continued for three or four minutes, and the guards becoming satisfied that the dog had given a false alarm kicked the animal until he became silent.

Then Jim crept along close to the log to see where Wild was.

Right ahead of him there was an open spot, but Wild was not there.

"Am I dreaming, or what?" thought Jim, rubbing his eyes. "This is just the place where Jack disappeared, and now Wild has gone in the same way."

But he was bound to find out what had become of his chum, if possible, so he crept off to the left in order to not cross the open spot, and made for a growth of bushes; but as he had done the same thing once before that night, when he was hunting for Jack, it must be said that he did not feel very confident of finding Wild.

CHAPTER IX.

WILD SETTLES UPON A PLAN OF ACTION.

When Young Wild West started to go to the place Jim Dart directed him in order to find the spot where Jack Robedee had disappeared, he had no idea what was going to happen to him.

As he reached the end of the log he saw an open spot ahead of him which was only partly covered by snow.

He looked around cautiously, and then noticing that the nearest Indian doing picket duty was not in sight, he started to cross the open spot.

Then it was that he met with a great surprise.

The instant he reached the edge of it he was plunging down an icy incline.

People in his business seldom make an error that will

from their enemies swarming upon them no matter how great a surprise they meet with.

And so it was with Wild.

He slid downward for a dozen feet or more, and then brought up in a mixture of mud, ice and water.

"Aha!" he muttered. "Now I know how Jack came to disappear. Jove! that was a great slide, and no mistake! I wonder if Jack will come tumbling after me, as Jill did after Jack!"

Then he laughed softly to himself as he realized that he was the Jill in the case, as Jack certainly must have fallen down the icy hill before him.

But if such was really the case, what had become of Jack?

That was a sort of puzzle to him then.

Wild had tumbled into a sort of natural tunnel, it seemed.

The entrance to it was covered by a tangled growth of vines, and he had tumbled through them without the least bit of noise to let Jim know what had become of him.

"I'll crawl out and tell him," he muttered. "Then we will both come down here and look for Jack. It may be that he got knocked senseless by the fall, although that don't seem possible."

He started to crawl up the icy incline, but very quickly found that he could not do it.

It was much too steep for anything like that.

He did not make a great fuss over the fact that he could not get out.

Instead he reached up as far as possible, and then in a hoarse whisper, called out:

"Jim!"

"Wild!" came the answer, almost immediately.

Our hero was just about to tell his chum what was the matter when a ray of starlight suddenly flashed upon him, and the next instant a heavy body struck him and he was sent sprawling on his back.

Jim had found him, but not in the way he had calculated on.

He had crawled right into the hole and taken the same slide his companion had.

Wild West could scarcely refrain from laughing.

"Are you hurt, Jim?" he whispered.

"No," was the reply. "What in the world is the matter, anyway? That was the quickest slide I ever took, I guess."

"No doubt of it. Well, now you can easily understand how it was that Robedee disappeared so suddenly."

"Yes; but where is he?"

"I don't know. He may have managed to get out in some way, and then got captured by the redskins."

"I guess it would be safe to light a match here, don't you think so?"

"Yes."

"Well, I will light one, then."

"Go ahead. Keep back pretty well, and then it will be sure not to be seen outside."

Jim struck a match.

As the flickering flame flared up the two boys saw that they were standing in the very commencement of a tunnel of natural formation.

Their feet were in the mud and slush, which had gathered in a sort of basin, but beyond that there was an irregular bottom of hard clay.

"We can manage to get out of here all right, I think," whispered Wild. "You could get upon my shoulders and get out all right, and then pull me up afterward. But I don't think we ought to get out just yet."

"What do you propose?"

"To go through this tunnel and look for Jack. Haven't you noticed that it points directly for the Indian camp?"

"Blamed if you ain't right! I wonder if it could be that the passage comes out in the camp, and Jack has gone through and got caught?"

"The chances are that just such a thing has happened. Have you got plenty of matches with you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I haven't; so you can use some of yours."

Jim produced a handful of matches from his pocket and quickly lighted one of them.

Then Wild took it from him and boldly led the way into the tunnel-like passage.

Though it was rather crooked and irregular, it was amply large enough to let them through in single file.

Wild led the way for a dozen yards or more, Jim lighting a fresh match every time one showed signs of going out.

Then a sudden thought struck our hero, and he came to a halt and stooped to examine the ground.

A muffled cry of joy and satisfaction came from his lips.

On the clay bottom of the passage the prints of a man's boots could be seen.

But that was not all.

Near one of the footprints the burned end of a match lay.

Wild picked up the bit of charred wood and said:

"Robedee has gone through here ahead of us, Jim."

"That is so, as sure as guns!" was the reply.

"What could have happened to him, then?"

"I suppose that is for us to find out."

"That is right. But if we could form some conclusion beforehand, it might help us a little."

"The only conclusion I can form is that he has been captured."

"That looks plausible; but still there is a doubt in my mind."

"Well, I hope he hasn't."

"So do I. But come on! We will find out just as soon as possible."

They proceeded through the tunnel for a dozen yards more. Then they suddenly came in contact with a pile of fresh dirt.

Almost at the same instant a groan reached their ears.

The two looked at each other in amazement.

The groan came from beneath the pile of dirt, it seemed, and both their thoughts were centered on Jack Robedee.

"Hello, Jack!" Wild called out.

"Is that you, Wild?" came the feeble response.

"Yes; where are you?"

"I'm buried! Get me out, for gracious sakes! I can't last much longer!"

"We will do that right away, Jack. Now, just take it easy, will you?"

"Yes; I'll be patient. I thought I was a goner, but it is all right now."

Wild and Jim began digging the dirt from the pile as fast as they could.

They had nothing but their hands to work with, but it was soft and yielding, and they fairly made it fly.

In a few minutes a lighted match disclosed Jack's head and face.

The two boys worked like beavers, and they soon came to a flat rock that had fallen upon him with the dirt.

That was what had held him down.

The dirt was quickly scraped from this, and then by their united efforts they lifted the rock aside.

Robedee quickly struggled to his feet then.

"Gracious!" he exclaimed, wiping the perspiration from his brow. "That was a close call, and no mistake!"

He had a bottle of spirits with him, and producing it from his pocket, he took a good pull from it.

That made him feel something like himself again.

"Tell us what happened to you, Jack," said Jim.

"I kin do that easy enough. I tumbled into ther hole so sudden that I didn't know what struck me," was the reply. "But I had sense enough not to holler an' let ther Injuns know we was around. I tried to git out, an' couldn't. Then I called you as loud as I dared to, but couldn't make you hear me. After I had made up my mind that you had gone on back to ther camp I lit a match an' started to explore this passage, thinkin' that it might fetch me out somewhere."

"It would have brought you right into the camp of the Indians, or else directly under it," observed Wild.

"Is that so? I had no idea of that. Well, anyhow, I kept comin' further an' further through the passage, an' jest as I got here ther roof caved in on me and pinned me to ther ground."

"And you have been lying here ever since?"

"Yes; I hollered a little when I found that I was buried alive, thinkin' that I would stand a better chance if ther Injuns got me than I would here. But no one heard me, without you fellers did, an' then after a while I sorter went to sleep, or somethin', an' I didn't wake up till jest now when I heard you in here."

"You certainly had a hard experience," said Young Wild West, shaking his head. "I should not want to go through the same thing myself."

"No; nor I," Jim chimed in.

"Let's git out of here," exclaimed Jack, after a pause.

"Not yet," replied our hero. "I want to go a little further through this tunnel."

"Better not. It is liable to cave in on us again."

"We will run that risk. We will keep a few feet apart, so in case there is a cave-in we won't all get buried. That would give us a chance to dig one another out."

Robedee made no further objection.

There was no wonder that he wanted to get out of the place. To be buried alive is an awful experience.

He had been very lucky that more dirt had not fallen over his face.

If there had he would never have been able to shake it off, and thus be able to breathe.

Wild now led the way, with Jim close at his heels and Jack a dozen feet in the rear.

In a little while they reached the end of the passage.

The fact of one of the matches going out unexpectedly disclosed the truth that there was a draught somewhere close by.

And so there was, for they could see the glimmer of a fire.

"We are right under the camp of Running Fox," whispered Wild. "Now we have got to be cautious, if we never were before. The least noise we make might be the means of us being discovered."

Our hero began making an examination of the place.

He crawled right up to the place where the slanting stream of light came in and found the trunk of a half decayed tree lying there.

The roof of the natural passage at that point was V-shaped and of rock.

If it had not been for the tree trunk he could have crawled out, had he so desired.

Just beneath this was an uneven slab. The tree resting on this did not, or could not fit snugly, and that was why the slant of light was allowed to come in.

It did not take Wild long to find out that there was a hollow right here, and on the level ground above but six or seven feet distant was the edge of the fire.

Young Wild West was jubilant at this discovery.

"I think I see a way of saving that girl," he said. "If we

only had a shovel, or something of the kind, I would attempt it right now."

"What would you do?" asked Jim.

"I would dig a place large enough to get out of here, and then hunt around with this blanket and headgear on till I found the tepee where the girl is a prisoner."

"That would be a dangerous thing to do, especially the last."

"Well, it can't be done now, anyway, as by the time we got back to the camp and found a shovel it would be getting daylight. Our only hope is that the Indians will stay here another day."

"They mean to stay longer than that, I think," said Jack. "It is my opinion that they are forming here for the purpose of makin' a stand agin the soldiers. They have certainly got a big gang together, an' I have an idea that there will be more comin' to-morrow."

"Before we leave the vicinity we have got to hide the body of the sentry I killed," spoke up Jim.

"Oh, we will slide that down in the mouth of the passage."

This being settled, they started back for the other end of the tunnel.

Wild and Jim pushed Jack up first, and as soon as he reported that the coast was clear they came up.

It was not a hard task for them to get out by assisting each other, but for one of them alone it would have been almost an impossibility.

The body of the Indian was not far distant, and as the other sentry on that side of the camp was seated on the ground with his back to a tree, by cautious movements they dragged it over and sent it sliding down the icy incline.

The tangled vines came back in their place easily enough, and then our three friends crawled slowly from the spot.

In a little while they were able to walk upright and make faster progress.

As soon as they reached the camp Wild gave the order for all hands to mount.

"Delaney," said he to the cavalryman, "I want you to ride in the direction of the fort as fast as you can and meet the men who are heading this way, or will be by that time. Bring them right along to the place where we laid in wait for the Indians and got fooled by their taking the opposite side of the river. Do you understand?"

"Yes; I understand perfectly. But——"

"There are no buts about it, now. I have decided on a plan of action, and the girl will be rescued before the fight starts, I am sure."

"All right, sir!" and Delaney rode off.

CHAPTER X.

THE CAPTIVE MAIDEN HAS TWO PROPOSALS OF MARRIAGE.

Running Fox really had quite a stronghold on the bank of the river where his camp was located.

The wily chief knew that the troopers were hot after him, and he was bent on wiping out as many of them as possible.

He had sent out runners east, west, north and south to gather in as large a force as possible, so he would be able to whip the whites thoroughly when the fight took place.

The Comanche chief was trying hard to emulate Sitting Bull in his feat of wiping out General Custer and his command, and his idea was to send out a small force of men—say a hundred—and have them lead the soldiers direct to the camp, which was effectually concealed in the timber.

Then the thing would be done from ambush.

The big chief was much elated when the band of his followers brought the captive white maiden into camp with them.

It seems that the medicine man had predicted that he would

have a white squaw before many moons, and this just hit the case exactly.

"Oak Heart was a great medicine man, the Comanche thought now.

But one thing, the spot the Indians had selected for their camp was new to them.

They were not aware of the fact that there was anything like a tunnel underneath it.

Running Fox did not rise until the sun was pretty well up the next morning, and when he did show himself it was reported to him that one of the braves who had been standing guard was missing.

A search was made for him, and after a couple of hours one of the Indians came in with the news that the brave had been found, but was dead.

"How did he die?" the chief inquired, with lowering brow.

"He tumbled in a hole and broke his neck," was the reply.

"Ah! You did not take his body from the hole, did you?"

"No."

"Let it be there, then. Any brave who is fool enough to fall in a hole and break his neck should stay right where he falls. That is a good enough grave for him."

This conversation had been carried on in the Indian tongue, of course, and in a perfectly good humor the chief sat down to the breakfast that was quickly brought to him.

When he had eaten till he had absolutely no room for more, Running Fox ordered his pipe to be brought to him, and then took a good smoke from some of the tobacco that had been taken from the pockets of his many victims.

While he was smoking, Joe Antelope, the half-breed, came along and halted in front of him.

"Good-morning, chief!" he said, in the Comanche tongue.

"Morning!" grunted Running Fox.

"What are you going to do with the paleface maiden your braves brought into camp last night?"

"Make her my squaw."

The half-breed walked away without another word.

Evidently he was of the opinion that he had done enough to be entitled to some consideration.

And now Running Fox was giving him no thanks.

Joe Antelope made up his mind that he would have the girl for a wife, anyhow.

He knew where the tepee was in which she was confined, and after a while he went to it.

On a pile of skins a sad-faced maiden sat when the villain entered.

She looked expectantly, and her eyes brightened just a trifle when she saw that it was not a full-blooded Indian who stood before her.

"I have come to save you, miss," he said, in as gentle a voice as he could command.

"Oh, I am so glad!" she cried.

"What is your name?" the villain went on, not noticing her remark and feasting his eyes on her beautiful face.

"Mollie Hampton."

"All right, Mollie. In order to escape from the Indians you must promise me one thing."

"What is that?" and her eyes opened wide.

"You must promise to marry me."

Something like a wail of despair came from the girl's lips, and she sank back upon the pile of skins and burst into a flood of tears.

"All right, then, you can stay here and become the squaw of Running Fox."

Without another word he arose and left the tepee.

The half-breed had not been gone many minutes when Running Fox came to the tepee himself.

"Paleface maiden heap much cry," he began.

"Oh, set me at liberty and let me go back to my people!" she cried. "I have heard that Running Fox is a good chief, and he will surely let me go."

Mollie Hampton was trying to work a little strategy by saying this.

"The face of the paleface maiden is like the sunshine and her eyes are like the stars. She says Running Fox is a good chief, so Running Fox says she is a fine maiden. He will make her his squaw and she shall have six ponies and a string of gold beads. Paleface maiden kiss Running Fox."

At this the girl uttered a scream, and then with a sudden movement she grabbed the keen-edged knife that protruded from his belt and raised it to plunge it into her heart.

"Paleface maiden heap big fool!" he said, as he seized the weapon and tore it from her grasp. "She make up her mind by and by that Running Fox make her good husband."

With that he left the tepee.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

George Delaney rode hard all that night.

Nothing occurred to interfere with him, and about ten the next morning he sighted a large band of horsemen coming toward him.

He rode slowly till he met them, and then what was his surprise to find that General Johnson was himself in charge of the force.

Delaney promptly rode up to the general, saluted, and rendered his report.

The commander listened to what he had to say, and then commending him for what he had done, ordered him to fall in in the ranks.

General Johnson had six companies of troops under him, and he meant to do something.

He had received Young Wild West's message early that morning, when the wagon train had arrived safely at the fort.

He felt that he could depend on the young scout, who had made such a reputation for himself, so that was why he came himself with a large force of men.

The fort and adjacent property was practically unprotected, but Young Wild West had said that he knew where the Comanche chief was located with his mixed band of red demons, and the general concluded to take the risk and wipe the scourge off the earth.

Things worked exactly right, and that evening, shortly after darkness set in, the troopers rode up to the spot where they were to meet Young Wild West and his three companions.

And they found them there, sure enough.

Our friends were promptly introduced to the general and he shook hands with them.

"You can see how much faith I put in you, Young Wild West," he said, "by my coming here. I wanted to personally command in this skirmish, and I wanted also to see some of your work in the line of strategy."

"Thank you for the compliment, general," Wild replied. "I don't know how much strategy I have used in perfecting my plans, but with a little hard thinking and a whole lot of good luck thrown in, I think we have things just right. There are now about eight hundred Indians camped along the river under the cover of a growth of timber. I will tell you my plans, if you please."

"Certainly. I want to hear them, by all means."

Wild led him aside and told him just what he had laid out to do, as the reader knows.

Then he suggested that a small detachment should ride past the Indian camp to lure them to make an attack, and while

the fighting was taking place the rest of the force would sweep down on the camp and surprise them.

While this was all taking place Wild and Jim were to be in the tunnel under the camp, and when the proper moment arrived, they were to rescue the captive maiden.

"When do you think the proper time would be to make the attack?" the general asked.

"Any time now; the sooner the better, I think."

"Well, we will make for your camp in the woods this side of the Indians, then, and when you say the word we will make the dash."

"Very well, sir. Please pass the word for your men to be as silent as possible. We don't want to let them know that we have such a large force. As it is, they outnumber us three to one, and will give us a good fight; and if they were ready for us they might put up more than a good fight."

"You are right on that point."

The troopers rode along with our friends in the lead.

No talking was allowed, so they went along pretty quietly.

When the small piece of timber was at length reached a rest was taken.

Young Wild West and Jim Dart then got themselves in readiness to go on their dangerous mission.

"Look at your watch, general," said Wild, as they were ready to start.

The general did so.

"It is a quarter past nine," he remarked.

"Well, promptly at a quarter to ten I advise you to let Cheyenne Charlie and Jack Robedee lead about twenty men past the camp, so they may be seen by the Indians. Let them make a running fight of it, and draw as many of the redskins after them as possible. Then you can make a charge upon the camp. If nothing happens to us Jim and I will be there to do some of the fighting."

There was such an air of confidence and sincerity about the young scout that the able military man looked at him in admiration.

And yet he was not certain that the Indians were located so close by.

But he took Young Wild West's word for it.

But let us follow Wild and Jim on their perilous undertaking.

They used the same tactics as they had the night before and rapidly neared the camp.

They were certain that the redskins were still there, as they had noticed three different bands riding in that direction from the place where they were in hiding that day.

Our friends soon found that there were more pickets than usual scattered about the camp, and it behooved them to proceed with the utmost caution.

It took them a little longer than they expected to get to the opening in the ground, and it was with a sigh of relief that Wild allowed himself to slide down the slippery descent.

When he brought up against the body of the dead Indian he shrugged his shoulders.

Jim came down next.

They had a shovel with them, and a torch, so they lighted the latter and made their way through the passage.

When they reached the end Wild pulled out his watch.

Twenty minutes had elapsed since they left the general.

"In fifteen minutes more the ball will open," he said. "Give me that shovel, Jim."

Jim handed it over, and our hero began to dig around the end of the decayed tree trunk.

When Wild had got the hole big enough to thrust his head through he took the risk and did so.

Jim now lent his assistance and the hole was soon enlarged as big as they wanted it.

Everything was ready now, so Wild took the head dress and blanket that had belonged to the red Jim had slain the night before and put them on.

Then he pulled out his watch and noted the time.

It lacked but two minutes of the time that the detachment was to start out under the lead of Cheyenne Charlie and Jack Robedee.

The two now lapsed into the utmost silence and waited.

Suddenly they heard a great commotion above them.

Half a minute later they could hear shooting.

Wild now crawled up from the hole and lay beneath some brush for a moment.

Then he gradually began to work himself out.

His head once out he slowly arose right beside the fire.

The braves were hurrying about in every direction, and the next moment he was right among them.

Suddenly the daring boy's eyes lighted on Running Fox, the Comanche chief.

He was just about to enter a tepee before which two braves stood guard.

Wild did not hesitate, but ran after him, and pushing the guards aside, followed the chief inside.

"Running Fox come to kiss paleface maiden before he go out to fight soldiers," Wild heard him say.

Then something did kiss the Comanche chief, and it proved to be his last kiss this side of the happy hunting grounds.

It was Wild's keen-edged knife!

As Running Fox dropped to rise no more Young Wild West stooped to the ground and felt for the captive.

She had fainted from sheer fright, but he soon got hold of her and picked her up in his arms.

Then he strode out of the tepee just as the cavalry came dashing up to the camp.

The guards were too astonished to pay any attention to the young scout, so he leaped over the brush and dropped into the hole with his unconscious burden.

The boys in blue carried everything before them.

For fifteen minutes the battle raged, and then the Indians were crying for quarter on all sides.

Meanwhile Cheyenne Charlie and Jack Robedee, with the horses that belonged to their party, had gone around to the entrance to the natural tunnel that had served our hero so well.

They scarcely got there when Wild and Jim came with the rescued girl.

She was drawn up by a lariat, and then the two boys were landed safely.

There is little more to tell.

The victory of the troopers proved to be the greatest ever heard of in that vicinity.

Fully three fourths of the Indians were slain in the fight and the loss to the men from the fort was exceedingly light.

Our friends accompanied the general and his troops to Fort Smith, where they were forced to stay for nearly two weeks, on account of a heavy fall of snow.

But Young Wild West's strategy had proved to be the proper thing, and the Comanche chief had surely made his last raid.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST'S GRIT; OR, THE GHOST OF GAUNTLET GULCH."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

Miss Louise Stebinger, linotype operator in the office of the Herald-Leader, Menominee, Mich., died of heart failure recently. When taken to an undertaking establishment \$12,000 in bonds were found sewed to the inside of her corset. She came to Menominee from Chicago and was the only woman operator here in the two cities.

F. T. Jane, the well-known naval expert, addressing a meeting in Liverpool the other night, said it was not generally known that the Germans tried to land an expeditionary force in England and that it was the British navy that made them go back to their harbor again. The navy saved the country, he said, and there was never a word of it in the newspapers.

So satisfactory has the experiment of employing a dozen women as street car conductors proved that the Corporation Tramways Committee, Glasgow, Scotland, decided to employ as many additional women as would be necessary to fill the vacancies caused by men enlisting for service at the front. It is expected that 400 women will be required. They will receive 27 shillings (\$6.75) weekly and service uniforms will be provided.

Martha Schultz, the 15-year-old daughter of a well-to-do farmer, was recently attacked by two masked women near a coke plant in the outskirts of Connellsville, Pa. One of the women held the girl while the other pressed on each cheek the uncorked neck of a bottle filled with acid. Her face was badly burned, and she was then allowed to go. Some time ago Miss Schultz received a letter ordering her to place \$1,000 and a gold watch in a secluded spot. She ignored the letter.

Thomas Jefferson invented the modern plow. There were plows, of course, thousands of years before the time of the Sage of Monticello, but he first laid down the mathematical principles that underlie the construction of the plow and so enabled any blacksmith to make one. A plow consists of two wedges, a cutting and a lifting wedge, and Jefferson discovered and enunciated the proportions of each and the relations each bore to the other. Before his day no two smiths made plows alike. Now they are all made in accordance with a mathematical formula.

A great deal of interest has been shown in the programme recently issued, giving details of the proposed transcontinental automobile tour over the Old Trails route under the auspices of several road associations. Three trips are planned: One leaving the headquarters of National Highway Association, 18 Old Slip, New York City, June 15, over the Old Trails route, the programme for which has already been issued; an eastern return trip, leaving San Francisco about August 1, and a third westward trip, leaving New York about September 6, for both of which programmes are now being prepared.

A direct photograph of Mellish's comet, made at the Lowell Observatory the other morning, shows a tail composed of two divergent branches, the longer one of which is probably not less than 3,000,000 miles in length. Observations of the spectrum of the comet, it was announced recently, revealed the presence of the usual cometary gases. Cyanogen is one of its more prominent constituents, but appears in this comet in peculiar spectroscopic form, which may be of special scientific interest, while hydro-carbon is less prominent than in most comets. Other gases or vapors are evidenced by the presence in the spectrum of several strong, bright bands, but the chemical identification of these is as yet unknown.

Experiments made in New York for determining the shortest distance in which an automobile can be stopped when running at different speeds show that every increase of 50 per cent. over 20 miles an hour increases the distance required for stopping over 100 per cent., and that a car running forty miles an hour will go more than four times as far before it can be stopped as a car running at half that speed, or twenty miles an hour, says Popular Mechanics. The tests were made with a 50-horse-power car, with brakes in perfect working order. At eight miles an hour, the car was stopped within 6 feet, while at fifteen miles an hour, 15 feet of distance was required. A space of 25 feet was required for stopping with the car going at twenty miles an hour; 35 feet, at thirty miles an hour; 87 feet, at thirty-five miles an hour, and 103 feet, at forty miles an hour.

That none of the fourteen-inch rifles of the Canal defenses shall be fired until the powder chambers have been bored out so that the charge may be greatly increased, is the official order issued recently that has surprised and interested artillery officers on the Isthmus. The work is to be done while the guns are in their present positions on the gun carriages. The range of the guns will be so increased as to make them equal to the most powerful guns on the most modern battleships with the changes that will be made in these guns by increasing the size of their powder chambers. As to whether the guns will have the strength to be effective and safe, and whether the carriages will be able to sustain the shock, is a question on which artillery officers decline to be quoted. But they recall that one of these fourteen-inch rifles burst when fired with a charge of powder only slightly greater than the prescribed charge. All the newer guns of that class have now been fitted with a heavy steel band at the point of greatest strain. The Canal defenses are to be strengthened by a number of the most modern field guns with a maximum range of some 11,000 yards, and a very effective range up to 7,000 yards. They will be so placed as to command the mine fields at each terminal, but they can easily be transported to any other place.

The Fate of Philip Funk

—OR—

LEFT IN THE LAND OF FIRE

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XV (continued)

There was no answer.

After calling several times and getting no answer, Tom ventured to cross the cabin, and threw open the door.

The stateroom was empty. It had evidently been occupied by poor Susie, for there were her dresses hanging around.

There was no one here and no one in the cabin.

Tom began to think that his imagination must have been playing tricks on him and he beat a hasty retreat.

"Well!" cried George.

"There isn't any one there. I can't find a soul."

"I believe this is the hoodoo ship, upon my word," said George. "Hurry up and get out of it, boy!"

Tom made for the hatch and found plenty of provisions as soon as he got below.

The dwarfs had saved him the trouble of looking for them, too, for they had opened almost every box and barrel left behind them, and their contents lay scattered about.

Tom selected a large, square box and, getting it on deck, managed to fix it in the bo'sen's chair.

Into this he put two hams, a side of bacon, a small cheese, a barrel of ship biscuit, some cans of salmon, corn, peas, and some cartridges, which George pulled over to the bluff.

"That will do," he shouted. "For heaven's sake, don't stay there any longer than you have to; come right back, boy!"

"Perhaps I'd better send over another load," said Tom. "There's lots of stuff here."

"It's all quiet?"

"Yes, yes! I don't hear a sound. I think I must have been mistaken."

"No; you were not mistaken, either. That's the demon's ship."

"Nonsense!" cried Tom. "I'm not going to be scared off until my work is done. I'll pull back the chair and send over a couple more loads and then we won't have to bother to come back again any more!"

This was done, and then Tom allowed himself to be pulled over in the chair.

Of course, he and George had a lot to say about it all the while Tom was dressing, and they were eating a cold meal, washed down by ice-cold water from a spring which bubbled out from under a ledge of rocks.

George had all the superstitions of a sailor.

He declared that the Olsen was a haunted ship; that

Susie and the dog were ghosts and that Jeff had been spirited away by the "witch power" of the girl, as he expressed it.

Tom tried to talk him out of it all, but it was no sort of use.

After they were through eating, they returned to the promontory and made another thorough search for the missing ones, but could find no trace of them.

Nothing could be seen of the dwarfs down on the rocks, either, although they could hear their voices in the cave, which undoubtedly existed below the cliffs.

Night was now coming on again, and George insisted upon returning to the scene of the wreck, and did not hesitate to give for a reason that he was afraid to stay at the place where the mysterious disappearances had occurred.

Here they went down on the beach, built a fire under the cliffs and agreed to take turns in sleeping. George lay down to rest first, for the poor fellow had been without sleep even longer than Tom, owing to some trouble he had with the mate on the night before they were put ashore on the Terra Del Fuego coast.

It was dreary work sitting there by the fire listening to the lapping of the waves against the rocks.

They had been able to collect plenty of driftwood, so Tom kept the fire going and its light made the wreck comparatively plain.

The ship now came to have a great fascination for Tom. He could not keep his eyes off of it, but in spite of the closeness with which he watched it nothing appeared until at last along toward midnight, just as he was beginning to think of waking up George, he was suddenly startled by a peculiar cry.

Tom sprang up and ran to the water's edge.

Looking off at the ship he saw a dark figure crawling over the deck.

It was a man with an immense mass of hair standing up all over his head.

Reaching the rope, he leaped up, seized it and began working his way shoreward, hand over hand.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHO IS THIS MAN?

"George! Wake up, George, quicker!"

George was one of the sort who sleep with one eye open.

He heard Tom's excited call the instant it was uttered, and was on his feet with a bound.

"What is it, boy?" he exclaimed excitedly.

"Look!" cried Tom, pointing to the rope.

George had no sooner caught sight of the strange figure working its way along the rope than he gave one triumphant shout instead of being struck dumb with terror, as Tom fully expected he would be.

"It's Phil! It's Phil Funk and no one else!" he cried. "He's the only fellow I ever knew who would try a thing like that!"

"He's the one I saw in the cabin, George."

"Plast it all, why didn't I think of it? Of course it's Phil. I'd give him the call if——"

"Oh, don't!" shuddered Tom. "It may make him let go his hold."

"That's just why I shan't do it. Up on the bluff with you, boy! We will head him off there!"

They made for the top of the bluff with all speed, but were entirely behind time in the race.

The moving figure on the rope kept steadily on, throwing one hand over the other, and reached the bluff before they were halfway up.

No sooner had his feet touched the rocks than he uttered a horrible, blood-curdling yell which made Tom's blood fairly run cold.

"If it's your friend Funk he's a madman, that's one sure thing!" he exclaimed.

"By Jove, I'm afraid you are right there," said George. "Quick! we must overhaul him, boy!"

But they didn't.

The man was up on the ledges a hundred yards distant before they could get to the top of the bluff.

"Phil! Phil!" yelled George. "Don't you know your old friend? It's George Meacham! Hey, Phil. Come down here."

The figure paused.

They could just make him out in the dim light.

He was dressed in a pair of ragged old trousers, with neither shoes nor hat.

Over his body the skin of some animal was thrown, while the immense mop of standing hair helped to increase the wildness of his appearance.

The beard was heavy also, and came up under his eyes. There he stood waving his hands above his head, making a low moaning sound all the while, and in the moonlight could be pretty plainly seen.

"Is it Philip Funk?" asked Tom, as George stood silently gazing at him.

"I don't know. I swear I can't make out," was the answer. "The hair is just like Phil's, only of course it wasn't quite so long when I saw it last."

"It's a man, all right, George. You don't take it for a ghost?"

"No, no! I give up on that. It's a human being; never of course. If it is not Phil it must be some poor wretch who was marooned here."

At this time the wildman kept on waving his hands above his head, making the same moaning sound.

"Come down here!" called George again. "We won't hurt you. We are your friends."

"Friends! Friends! Friends!" yelled the figure, raising his voice each time he pronounced the word. "I have no friends. Who talks to me of friends? Friends! Friends! Ha, ha, ha!"

With this he uttered a frightful yell, almost a war-whoop! and, springing upon the top of the ledge like a goat, he disappeared on the other side.

"After him!" cried George. "We must overtake him at any cost!"

But they didn't.

When they reached the top of the ledge they could see the man running like a deer over the level plain, which extended to the base of the snow-covered mountain range.

They followed for some distance, but it was simply useless, so at last they gave it up, and returned to the shore, where Tom took his turn at sleeping, not waking up until the sun was high in the east.

He found that George had built up a good fire, and had fried some ham in a big frying-pan which he had sent over from the wreck in the provision box.

Not a thing had been seen or heard of the supposed Philip Funk, so George reported.

As for the wreck, it remained, now that low tide had come again, just the same as it was at low tide the day before.

"Tom," said George, while they were eating breakfast, "this must be a regular day of hunting. Jeff must be found if he is still alive, and as for that fellow we saw last night, whoever he is, we must find him, too."

"And Susie?" added Tom.

"I don't know about that girl," said George gloomily. "I think we might be better off if we didn't see her again."

"Still holding on to those same ridiculous notions?" laughed Tom. "I'll show you how much off you are about it all before you get through. Of course, the girl must be found if she is still alive."

George said nothing in reply to this, but it was easy to see that his superstition was still strong upon him.

After breakfast the boys packed up as large a supply of provisions as they could carry, and started along the bluff.

"What puzzles me," remarked Tom, "is that we have seen nothing of the dwarfs this morning. Everything is right for them to attack the ship again, and they haven't half cleaned out the pantry supplies yet, to say nothing of the cargo in the lower hold."

"I guess the reason is easy enough imagined," replied Tom. "Probably they got a rum barrel along with the rest of their plunder. If that is the case you won't see them back here till the last drop is gone."

"Hark!" cried Tom suddenly. "Did you hear it?"

George's face was as white as a sheet.

"Hear it? Yes, of course I heard it!" he said hollowly.

George seemed almost as much frightened as when he first found that Mate Topham had left him in the Land of Fire.

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

A FREAK EAR OF CORN.

A freak ear of corn, that is a genuine freak, was brought to Laurinburg, N. C., by J. A. Muse recently. It is a cluster of ears, nine in all. One is a full-grown ear and this is surrounded by eight smaller ears.

FOUND STOLEN GOLD.

The \$7,000 in gold bullion which was taken from a stage near Rye Valley, Ore., by two masked bandits has been found. The gold, cast in a solid brick, was found in a badger hole not far from the scene of the hold-up.

CAMPHOR IN THE PHILIPPINES.

It is reported that *Blumea balsamifera* which grows wild in abundance in the Philippines, has been found to be identical with the plant from which ngai camphor is obtained in certain parts of China. The commercial possibilities of this plant are now being investigated by the Philippine Bureau of Science and Bureau of Forestry.

ROBBERS SUBSTITUTE DUMMY SAFE.

Some time the other night robbers entered the Woolworth store, Camden, N. J., moved a heavy safe from its position under a bright electric light, and substituted in its place a dummy constructed of cardboard. When employees entered the store they were surprised when they noticed the oddly-constructed substitute. Investigation revealed the original burglar-proof safe in a secluded corner of the building with its door blown open. The thieves obtained less than \$100 from the safe.

FIND ANCIENT RELICS.

Discoveries of relics, said to antedate the Iroquois Indians, have been made at the foot of Owaseo Lake, near Auburn, N. Y. Edward H. Gohl, an adopted member of the Onondaga tribe of Indians, recently found a fragment of pottery. Further investigations resulted in the finding of several other pieces of other relics.

A scientific survey of the entire field has been begun. A force of men has been employed and nearly half an acre already has been explored. Most of the articles found thus far were at a depth of several feet.

DOOR FASTENER.

Placing a wedge under a door is one of the most effectual means of closing it, for pushing upon the door from the outside only increases the effect of the wedge. A convenient device of this kind is made of metal, and it not only serves to wedge the door but also contains a mechanical bell mounted on the same base and behind the wedge in such way that pressure on the face of the wedge by the door causes the bell to ring. The base carries a set of short points underneath so that it can be put in place and grip upon the carpet or flooring so as not to slide out of position. Such a device can be carried in the pocket, and it is to be recommended for trapping.

THE VIRGINIUS AFFAIR.

The *Virginus* affair occurred during the first Cuban war for independence. In October, 1870, the *Virginus* cleared from New York for Curacao, flying the American flag. Late in October, 1873, she was captured on the high seas by the Spanish gunboat *Tornado*, taken to Santiago, and there found to be loaded with arms for the Cubans, and carrying as passengers a number of Cubans, Americans and British subjects. The crew and passengers were tried by court-martial, and between November 4th and 7th, 90 Cubans, 6 British and 30 Americans were shot as pirates. The United States protested. The Spanish Government agreed that such proceedings must stop; but before its telegram ordering the execution to cease had arrived about everybody on the vessel had been executed. The United States demanded an apology, an indemnity and the return of the vessel. After a long and heated discussion, the Spanish Government proved to our satisfaction that the *Virginus* had no right to use the American flag, that she was therefore practically a pirate, and that she was well known as a filibuster. The vessel was returned to us, but Spain was not required to apologize or pay an indemnity. The *Virginus* foundered at sea on her way to New York about December 26, 1873.

DOGS AT THE "MOVIES."

That dogs can see and understand picture plays is undoubtedly true. While living in England, I had various friends try out their pets, with the results, recorded here, says a contributor to *Our Dumb Animals*.

In a north of England town there is a dog that does not show any interest in ordinary pictures. But if this dog views a film of a fox-hunt, a menagerie or a scene with dogs in it, he gets highly excited, and barks loud and long. Once he managed to get "behind" at a movie theater, after a leopard film had been shown, as he wanted to meet the big cat in the flesh.

A picture that moved him to fury was one of a man who grew horns and butted after drinking a glass of goat's milk.

On another occasion he went almost mad with joy at seeing an Irish colleen being presented with a little pig by her lover.

Not so long ago an entertainment was arranged for prize-bred dogs, the films used being animal ones. In the audience were three mastiffs, a bull-terrier, a bulldog, an Irish terrier, two great Danes and two fox-terriers. The first picture was of a dog show. All the dogs did was to walk up and down and look at it, almost on the verge of tears through being so bored. They seemed to say, "We know all about that." For it was clear that they could tell that the dogs on the film were not with them in the flesh. But when they saw an elephant walking it made them excited. They calmed down after a closer inspection, but the bull-terrier threatened to attack the elephant, while the two Danes barked loudly.

THE ROB ROYS

—OR—

BOLD BOB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM

By DICK ELLISON

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER V (continued)

Tip gasped.

"I done 'clar fo' de Lawd dat I disrecollect, Marse Bob," he stammered. "I done tink it was Marse Selden at de time, but now, sah, I can't nohow swar ter hit, fo' I done s'pect de pizen skunk had whiskers. Look heah, Topsey! Does vo' 'member 'bout dat chap we done heerd talkin' dat night we done hid behind de hedge? Speak up, gal, an' tell de truf ter Marse Bob. He won't bite yer, honey."

At the same time he gave her arm a warning pinch, and she took her cue at once.

"I s'pect I nebber tell anyting but de truf, Tip," and Topsey glared at him like a small fury. "I done tell no lies, and I wants yo' ter know hit. But I tinks jest de same as yo' does, chile. I s'pects de chap we heerd talkin' had whiskers. Yes, I knows he had whiskers on his chin, fo' I saw de wind blowin' fro' dem. I did, honey, shuah's yo' bawn."

In spite of himself Robert had to laugh. His two small witnesses evidently were not to be depended upon, and he began to realize that the case was more of a mystery than anything else.

"But what were you and Topsey doing behind the hedge, Tip?" he asked. "Tell me what you were doing there?"

"Well, sah, if yo' won't tell poppy or mammy, we done want ter git a good, fat hen fo' breakfast, fo', sah, we has ter tak what's lef' an' hit's mighty unhandy sometimes. But we done git scared, and doan git der chicken, so dat's how we done fin' out 'bout de pizen snake datdone wanten put a bullet fro' yo' gizzard, sah."

And that was all that Robert could get out of his two small, dusky witnesses. And he arrived at the conclusion that they had drawn very largely upon their own imagination when they said it was Henry Selden who had planned to shoot him. So nothing more was said about the matter, though Professor Romaine and all the members of the Rob Roys hoped that by remaining silent they would be able to discover the cowardly would-be murderer.

CHAPTER VI.

VIRTUE DEFEATED BY VILLAINY.

A couple of weeks later, and our hero had fully recovered from his wounds. He felt confident that Tip and Topsey had told the truth in the beginning, but had become in some way frightened at the last. That was some-

thing he could not account for, and yet he determined to await results and see.

One bright, moonlight evening, just about tea time, for it was dark very early during the late fall weather, a messenger came to the college, bearing a note from Sidney Worth, requesting him to call at her home. It was quite a surprise to him, for the fair, young girl had never before done such a thing in all her life.

"What can it mean?" he murmured to himself. "Although I am glad to get such a note, yet it is something I never knew her to do before. But, of course, I shall go. First of all, because I want to go. I want to see her; secondly, because it would be very rude in me not to respond. She is a dear, good girl—ah, if I were only rich, how quickly would I tell her what is in my heart. But I am poor, therefore I must remain silent, for she is rich, and people would say that I am a fortune-hunter."

Shortly after tea he set out for the fair Sydney's, arrayed in his very best. His heart throbbed thick and fast as he walked along the grassy roadway, for he was interested more deeply in the girl than he cared to admit.

"I wonder what she wants of me?" he asked himself again and again. "It seems strange that she should write me when she has never before in all her life done such a thing. Well, when I tell her that the Rob Roys are going to try their fortunes once more against the Orangemen she will be delighted. As soon as I can feel equal to the task, I will show them what we can do, and I know we are sure to win, for if——"

The sentence was never finished, for two dark figures sprang from behind the hedge, and the next instant Bold Bob felt a stunning blow upon his head. After that all was blank. He knew no more. It was the same as if he were dead, and while he laid there still and motionless, a low, mocking laugh rang out upon the night air.

"We worked it pretty neat this time, didn't we, old man?" a hateful, rasping voice whispered. "Now, into the carriage with him, and when he wakes up again, he will find himself in the house of Madam Clements. But before he is able to realize where he is, Prof. Romaine shall learn where his favorite pupil is. Ha, ha, ha! But it is a good joke on him. First of all, suppose we give him a taste of this, in order to keep him quiet. There," holding a sponge to the nostrils of the unconscious youth.

"I think he will keep still until we reach the madam's house. Now, into the carriage with him, and be sure that you lift your share. Don't leave it all to me."

It was the voice of Henry Selden speaking, and as our young readers must have already surmised, his companion was Rolf Wamba. The house they mentioned was one of the most notorious in that part of the county. It was an infamous roadhouse, kept by Madam Clements, a woman who was one of the very worst of her kind. There had been more robberies under that roof, more gambling, and many even hinted at murders, than any other house of that stamp. For a young man or woman to be seen in that place was sure disgrace to either.

And this was the den into which they preferred to place our hero, intending afterwards to inform Professor Romaine, in the hope of getting him expelled from the college. It was one of the most cowardly and dastardly of tricks ever planned, and if it succeeded, it meant the ruin of Robert MacGregor.

In a short time the infamous place was reached, a pretty place standing upon a hill at quite a distance from the public highway. It was set in the midst of a grove, and was almost hidden from view.

A sharp, sudden peal at the bell brought Madam Clements herself to the door. She was at first sight a handsome blonde, but a second sight revealed the fact that her pink and white complexion was due to the use of paint and powder, which, beneath the gaslight, hid her wrinkles, and her golden locks were bleached. She had a hard, wicked face, telling that she had seen all there was of life—that is, the worldly side of it.

A smile curved her painted lips as she saw the unconscious youth between the two.

"So you have another dupe with you?" she asked, with a shrug, "and you want madam to keep him here for you? You see, I understand pretty well."

"Yes, we want you to keep him here, madam, until we inform Prof. Romaine where his favorite is," Henry Selden answered, with a leer. "You must try and fill him up with brandy while we are gone, and when the professor arrives in search of his dear boy, show him at once into the chamber where he is. Say that he came here under the influence of liquor, and that you kindly took him in and cared for him. You know what to do?"

"Ah, yes," and madam shrugged her shapely shoulders as she spoke. "Ah, yes, I know how to play my part. I have played it too often not to know it by heart. I will take good care of your friend, never fear, and at the same time protect your interest. The good professor you speak of shall find his favorite pupil here, but—in the condition you wish him to be found."

"And here is your reward, dear madam," Henry Selden replied, pressing several pieces of gold into her eager, outstretched hand. "See now that you do your part well, for it means a great deal to me."

"Never fear, my boy, but what I know my business," and madam chuckled softly to herself as she eagerly clutched the shining pieces of gold. "I have followed it up too many years to falter now. Your friend shall be well cared for as I promised you in the beginning, yet at the same time he shall be compromised. I promise you that."

"And I know that I can trust you, madam," Henry Sel-

den answered with a grin of satisfaction. "I only wish that little upstart, Sidney Worth, was with him, too. She is——"

"Sidney Worth!" madam exclaimed hoarsely. "Sidney Worth, did you say? Great heaven! Then she is the child of——"

"Colonel Worth," Selden broke in promptly, wondering why madam should be so agitated, "you surely ought to know him, for he is very popular and very rich."

"No, I—I do not know him," and Madam Clements' voice was very low and husky. "No, I have heard of him, but I do not know him. I will do my best to follow out your instructions, Mr. Selden," she added, speaking with an effort, "and I have never yet failed in anything I have ever undertaken."

"I shall trust you, madam," the young scoundrel replied, "and now good night and good-by."

When he was gone Madam Clements sank into a chair, and, burying her face in her hands, whispered huskily:

"The same, the same! Ah, my heaven! how my revenge has been completed, and how I shall make him suffer! How I shall make him suffer! Ha, ha, ha!"

While Professor Romaine was waiting to see Robert the next morning, he received the letter that horrified him. At first he crushed it in his hand, paying no attention to it, but gradually he became uneasy. Then he went up to the young man's room and found it empty. Therefore he knew there must be something in the report.

He went through his duties for the day, and when night fell he started for Madam Clements' roadhouse. He was half ashamed of himself, and yet he knew it was his duty to go, for the young man had not appeared at the college.

When he reached Madam Clements' place, a dim light shone through the glass door of the hall, and she herself, as usual, answered the bell. She admitted him, and in answer to his questions, nodded her head. Then at his earnest request she admitted him to the chamber where the young man lay, sleeping heavily. As he bent over him, the fumes of liquor on his breath greeted him, and he turned away sick at heart, believing the cruel falsehood. Virtue had been defeated by villainy.

CHAPTER VII.

EVIDENCE AGAINST BOLD BOB.

Professor Romaine could hardly believe his own eyes. There before him, apparently wrapped in a deep, drunken sleep, lay his favorite pupil, handsome Robert MacGregor, the bold, gallant captain of the Rob Roys.

The good man's face grew pale.

"Can I believe my own eyes?" he asked himself. "Can I believe that it is really Bold Bob who is lying before me unconscious, numb from the terrible liquor he has drunk. Ah, if it were only a dream, a vain, vain dream from which I might awaken."

(To be continued)

TIMELY TOPICS

Seymour, Ind., streets will be dogless if an unusual ordinance now proposed is passed by the City Council. Petitions signed by 300 property owners have been filed with the council requesting that an ordinance be passed to make it unlawful for dog owners to permit the animals to run at large. The first ordinance was filed some time ago and was regarded as a joke. The police estimate that there are 750 dogs in the city and only 150 licenses have been taken out since March 1.

Stung by conscience, a man who had been using a pass belonging to a railroad official forwarded a \$10 bill to pay for the traveling he had done without cost on the San Antonio and Aransas Pass railroad in the past. The letter, inclosing the new bill and a short letter, was addressed to H. D. Kilgore, city ticket agent, San Antonio, Texas. The conscience contribution was turned over to George F. Lupton, general passenger agent, who said that he was glad to see that the gentleman has evidently hit the "Philadelphia Sawdust Trail."

The southern party of the Canada Arctic expedition was safe on Sept. 13, 1914, according to letters of that date, received at Sioux City, Iowa, by Mrs. Anderson from her husband, Dr. Rudolph M. Anderson, who is in charge of the party. The letters were written from Herschel Island. Dr. Anderson, with his two ships, Alaska and North Star, according to the letter, had proceeded eastward as far as Dolphin and Union Straits. Mention was made of the relief party sent out to search for the Steffansson party of the Canadian Arctic expedition.

Lightning has been proved to have struck a building with a force equal to more than 12,000 horse-power. A single horse-power, in mechanical calculation, is equivalent to raising a weight of 33,000 pounds one foot in a minute. The force of lightning, therefore, has been proved to be equal to the raising of 381,000,000 pounds, one foot in a minute. This is equal to the united power of twelve of our largest steamers, having collectively twenty-four engines of 500-horse-power each. The velocity of electricity is so great that it would travel around the world eight times in a second.

Charles Burnham, forty-five, a painter, stumbled as he was ascending the steps of his home in Ashford street, Astor, N. Y., the other night, and fell against the railing. The contact ignited a box of matches in his waistcoat pocket. In an instant his clothes, oil-soaked in the course of his work, burst into flame. So bright was the flare that Mrs. Louise Monahan, his stepdaughter, thought at first the house was on fire. She wrapped rugs around him immediately, smothering the blaze. Burnham, unconscious, was taken to his physician, Dr. George N. Johnson, in the Johns Ferry Hospital, where it was said he may not live.

The claim of Tigerton, Wis., that it has the heaviest family in the United States, has been shattered by Watertown, Minn. Tigerton has the Hoffman family, nine of whose members weigh only 2,133 pounds, or an average of 233 pounds each; but Watertown has the Applequist family, the total weight of which is 2,390 pounds for only eight people. On reading of the Tigerton claim the Applequists went to the city scales and got the weights. They were recorded as follows: John Applequist, father, 280 pounds; Mrs. Applequist, the mother, 250 pounds; Charles Applequist, one of the boys, 410 pounds; Peter Applequist, 310 pounds; A. G. Applequist, 325 pounds; Mrs. Skone, 320 pounds; Mrs. Olson, 225 pounds, and Mrs. Peterson, 240 pounds. The eight Applequists, parents and six children, weigh just 257 pounds more than the nine Hoffmans.

Announcement of an advance in wages and reduction of working hours for all employees of the Ford Motor Company, Ltd., of Canada, was made recently by G. M. McGregor, general manager of the concern. All employees who have been in the service of the company six months or longer are to receive a minimum wage of 50 cents an hour, or \$4 a day, the working hours being reduced to eight hours a day, or forty-eight hours a week. The company employs about 2,400 persons at its factory at Ford, Ont., and its nine branches located in the principal cities of Canada. It is estimated that this advance in wages will distribute among Ford employees in Canada, in addition to the wages they already receive, about \$600,000 a year. The scale as adopted increases the wages of all employees 15 to 60 per cent. The parent Ford Company in Detroit pays a minimum wage of \$5 a day, based on a profit-distribution system. The Canadian company's wage scale is simply an advance in pay without reference to profits, it was stated.

From Switzerland, the home of the watch and clock industry, comes the description of a clock made entirely of straw and willow withes. Of course there is no particular value in the use of this material, except to demonstrate the ingenuity of the clockmaker. In this clock there is not a single piece of metal. Even the chimes are made of straw put through a special process, so as to give them a ringing tone when struck. Instead of the ordinary swinging pendulum, this clock is provided with a see-saw movement, there being two weights on each side. One great difficulty in making the interior mechanism of the clock was to get the proper elasticity in the springs, which were pressed and turned into coils very much resembling Chinese bamboo. The clock is nine feet high with a face eighteen inches in diameter. The base is of wicker construction from which four heavy linked straw chains serve as guys to keep the clock properly balanced. The movement operates 24 hours on each winding. It took over thirty months to complete the clock.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Fish are being shipped to England via Montreal from British Columbia waters, the reason being the fish shortage due to the war's interference with the North Sea fisheries.

It is announced in London that nearly \$2,500,000 capital has been promised for the proposed British national dyestuff industry, by means of which it is planned to supply the place of former importations from Germany.

Jerome Newberry, a young farmer of Redondo Beach, Cal., while ploughing a patch of ground which had been allowed to grow weeds for many years, unearthed a large gold watch which had been lost by his grandfather in 1860.

The port of New York in 1914 handled 46 per cent. of the entire export trade of the United States, and the total of \$1,807,000,000 of foreign trade, export and import, which passed through the port was larger than that of all the other American ports combined.

In 1914 the total value of all farm products in the United States was approximately \$10,000,000,000, which is \$83,000,000 more than the total for 1913, and breaks all records. The 1914 total is more than double the combined value of farm products fifteen years ago.

It is notorious that afforestation is one of the most urgent of China's needs, and it is therefore of interest to learn that a school of forestry is about to be established in the University of Nanking. The co-operation of the director of forestry at Manila has been secured, and it is proposed to send two experts from Manila to aid in establishing the school.

Wooden sandals are now being worn to a great extent by the laboring classes in Mexican cities and by natives engaged in farming, in place of the old form of leather sandals used by the Mexicans for many centuries. They are being substituted for the primitive home-made leather sandals because of the scarcity and high price of native tanned leather, because of the scarcity of sheepskin thongs for lining, and because the native Indian is becoming more particular about the appearance of his feet.

Mrs. Eugene A. Philbin, wife of Justice Philbin, of the Supreme Court, left a bag containing \$15,000 worth of diamonds and other jewels on board a Long Island train when she alighted at Garden City, L. I. The jewels were in a bag, which she did not miss until she reached the Garden City Hotel. County and house detectives set out at once to find the jewels, as Mrs. Philbin was not sure that they had been left on the train. Walter Breck, a ticket collector, saw the bag just as the train pulled into Hempstead. He opened it and was amazed at the contents. Purposing to turn it over to the lost and found department of the railroad in Brooklyn, he took a train leaving Hempstead at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon. Mrs. Philbin asked the train crew if they had seen the bag when the train passed through this place, and Breck returned the bag to her, receiving a reward of \$50.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Lady—I didn't know your little boy wore glasses, Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith—Well, yer see, miss, they belonged to 'is pore farver, and I thought it was a pity to waste 'em.

"Charles seems to be very exacting," said a fond mamma to the dear girl who was dressing for the wedding. "Never mind, mamma," said she sweetly. "They are his last wishes."

"The old man doesn't speak any foreign language, does he?" "No. He's just a plain, downright, honest, no-style, hard-workin', money-makin', family-supportin' American."

The Hibernian laborer paused in front of a book store and a sign in the window caught his eye: "Dickens' Works All This Week for Only \$4.00." "The divyle he does!" he exclaimed in disgust. "Well, the dirty scab."

"When I was shipwrecked in South America," said Captain Bowsprit. "I came across a tribe of wild women who had no tongues." "Mercy!" cried one of the listeners of the fair sex. "How could they talk?" "They couldn't!" snapped the old salt. "That's what made 'em wild."

A young fellow had "popped the question," and was anxiously awaiting the answer that was to decide his fate. "Do you ever gamble at cards?" the young lady asked. "No," he answered, "but if I did, now would be the time." "Why?" she inquired. "Because," he said, with a smile, "I hold such a beautiful hand!"

The solemnity of the meeting was somewhat disturbed when the eloquent young theologian pictured in glowing words the selfishness of men who spent their evenings at the club, leaving their wives in loneliness at home. "Think, my hearers," said he, "of a poor, neglected wife, all alone in the great, dreary house, rocking the cradle of her sleeping babe with one foot and wiping away her tears with the other."

THE GHOST.

By Horace Appleton

Tom Legget was the name of a very eccentric individual who formerly lived in the town of Greenfield.

His eccentricity was not of that kind which made him unpopular by either word or act.

Indeed, Tom would not have willingly injured the meanest insect that ever crawled.

Still, he had his errors—grave errors—and excessive drinking was one of them.

In Dean's house on a stormy night in winter, after inviting all hands to drink, Tom would launch into the greatest maze of yarns about this, that, and the other, ever heard of.

It was acknowledged by all that, when about half tipsy, he could invent more lies than any other man in town.

On the night when the following story of his was told—which I here give as near verbatim as I remember—the bar was pretty well filled with a motley assemblage of neighbors.

Some were seated in chairs around the fire, others on tops of barrels, and some on the lower end of the counter.

Customers were scarce, and the company present were mainly bent upon the enjoyment of their pipes, with a nip now and then at the ale.

A few feeble jokes had been gotten off at somebody's expense in the company, which were not relished any too well, when Tom opened with the following interrogatory:

"I say, landlord, did ye ever hear tell of a genuine ghost about these parts—a real, downright, out-and-out ghost?"

"No, Tom, I never did; unless that lame mule of Farmer Jones', which the boys whitewashed and tied to the church-bell, was one."

"Nary a time," said the unlucky owner of that piece of muleflesh, who occupied one of the barrel-heads. "Those boys got their deserts, and that 'ere mule is jest as pretty an animal as ever ye laid eyes on, now."

"Then Tom had better give us his story, for I have never heard that one about the mule beaten yet. What say the company?"

"The story! The story!" they all exclaimed.

Tom cleared his throat, adjusted himself to a more comfortable position in his chair before the glowing fire, and commenced:

"Ye all remember the cold, blustering, disagreeable weather of last twentieth of November, I suppose? It was the night Jeff Knox's brindled steer died, and all the ponds hereabout froze up solid. Well, on that night, as some of you well know, for I see 'em here now, I was seated with you around this fire, and engaged in about the same conversation. We got rather noisy as the hours wore on, and at last the landlord here turned us all out of doors. Didn't ye?"

"It was about the hour of closing, I think," mildly answered the landlord.

"Yes, and as we stood shivering around the doorstep the midnight express came thundering through the town, and ye asked us all in again for a nightcap. Well, when I

reached home that night someone had left a light on the sitting-room table with a mate to it in the fireplace. I thought it strange that such a big, roaring fire should have been left for me to go to bed by—quite an unusual thing.

"The old people have sat up later than common," I thought, never once thinking of the boys.

"I sat down in the big arm-chair in front of the fireplace, took off my boots and put them beside the fender, and then laid back and watched the huge log blaze.

"This is solid comfort," thought I. "Here I am having a nice time of it, and outside the weather is cold as fury!"

"I decided to have a little smoke and then retire; so I blew out the light and put my feet upon the fender.

"Very soon after I fell asleep in the chair with the pipe in my mouth.

"I had a distinct remembrance of hearing the bell ring one and of comparing the time with our old clock in the corner.

"It was just two minutes behind. When I awoke the hand pointed to three. I had slept two hours. Relighting my pipe, I turned my attention toward the fire, which had got down to embers.

"Fuel was added, and I soon had the pleasure of feeling myself growing warmer, for the room had cooled off rapidly during my sleep.

"It was half-past three o'clock when I determined to retire. I rose to get the lamp, when my eyes fell upon the west window, which looks out into an old cornfield at the back of the house.

"Was it fancy? Did my eyes deceive me?

"I thought as I looked a man's face dropped down out of sight.

"The curtain moved as if someone had hit it intentionally, and set it curveting from side to side.

"I did not see how it could be done with the window shut.

"While I was watching it and trying to think where the draught came from, the object that first gave me the shock came into view.

"It stood there looking straight into the room: a man—or, at least, a man's face.

"Goodness gracious, what ails the man?" I asked myself.

"There was in his face such an expression of diabolical wickedness as I never again wish to behold.

"He made no movement, nor spoke a word to explain himself. But right there under the window, in a black, shiny, broadcloth coat, an old silk hat that had seen many changes in fashion set jauntily on one side of his head, for all the world like a second edition of the village school-master; his face wan and pale, with high cheekbones; his chin covered with a stubble of short beard.

"But most startling of all, and what filled me with horror, was a wound in his neck.

"Those dead eyes looking into the room—the man standing there as if he had been a statue cut in stone.

"There was something so horrible in his face that for a minute or so I stood by the chair as if struck dumb.

"Where had I seen that shiny black coat and that old hat? Somewhere, it seemed to me, in my own family.

"His features, too, were not those of a stranger.

"Then I named over to myself several individuals whom I thought he resembled.

"There must be someone—yes, there was one—my wife's brother!

"I had heard her say that a younger brother had disappeared under circumstances that led them to think he had been murdered.

"This, then, must be his ghost returned to see his sister.

"But, pooh!" thought I. "There are no such things as ghosts! This must be some poor traveler who has cut himself by accident."

"At all events, I made up my mind to address him. I took one step forward, and as I opened my lips to speak the figure disappeared.

"There was no waving of the curtain now—nothing to show that there had been a ghostly presence behind it.

"Occasionally the slam of a door reached my ears, telling how the wind was using it.

"Presently I distinguished the tramp, tramp, tramp, of horses' feet.

"The stable was connected with the shed, but, strange to tell, the sounds were approaching the kitchen, seemingly but a few feet away from the very door.

"In a second more I was horrified to hear a horse's hoofs stamping across the kitchen floor.

"There is something awful in such sounds at such an hour, and for the first time I felt my hair begin to rise from my head.

"Looking around, I saw the odd figure once more at the window.

"The sight of that ghastly face and those glazed eyes watching me so intently drove me to decide upon acting at once.

"Speak!" I cried. "Are you a man or a ghost?"

"There was no response; only a side motion—a slight movement of the head, and the specter had disappeared again. No sound of wind this time, but those hoofs meandering here and there were more dreadful, and I concluded it must be some villain who meant to rob and murder me at the same time.

"Reaching above the fireplace, I took down my double-barreled gun, cocked both barrels, and deliberately pointed it toward the window, resolving to fire at the first glimpse of his ghostship, or, as I more than half-suspected, thief.

"All at once there came a terrific gust that shook the whole house from foundation to chimney.

"It made the old clock stop for the first time in a dozen years: roaring down the fireplace, scattering the ashes about the room, and half blinding me.

"Through the cloud of dust I saw the face again at the window.

"In another second my eyes were nearly demolished by the report of my gun.

"Both barrels, heavily loaded with shot, had gone right through the window, taking nearly the whole sash with it, and sending me flat on my back by the force of the concussion.

"What's the matter, Tom? What ye been shooting at at this time o' night?" were the first words I heard, after picking myself up from the floor.

"There in their night clothes stood the old folks, and behind them, in the doorway, the two boys—John and Harry.

"Grandfather held a candle in his hand, and looked at me with alarm in his face.

"The boys were whimpering with the cold.

"Ghosts or robbers, I ain't sure which," I replied.

"I started toward the window.

"On looking out I beheld the figure stretched at full length on the ground.

"The sight gave me courage.

"That ghost won't want to haunt these parts any longer," said I. "He has two charges of shot in his body somewhere—enough to kill even a ghost. Hold the lantern, grandfather, while I take a closer look at him."

"After placing the lantern in his hand, I sprang through the window-frame, and was soon bending over the supposed dead body.

"What was my astonishment and chagrin to find it neither ghost nor man, but a lot of straw, stuffed into my great-grandfather's old clothes, which had been used to scare crows; it had been redressed and fastened to a nail with a longcord, reaching from the boy's room down.

"It all flashed over my mind in an instant.

"The boys, knowing my late hours, had played the trick on me.

"I returned to the house, replying to inquiries that the corpse would lay where it was for the present.

"As for John and Harry, they had no further occasion to complain of the cold that night, for the warming they got before they went upstairs again was enough to last until daylight, and gave them a lesson they will not soon forget.

"Soon after I went out in the kitchen, and found the old mare standing with her head over the sink, patiently waiting for a drink.

"Her halter having become loosened, and the doors from stable to kitchen open, she had improved the opportunity to go on a tour of investigation.

"This, boys, is the sum total of my ghost story: about as real, I guess, as any that happen hereabouts.

"I never took much stock in these shrouded images—there is always some human agency about them: and as for the scare—well, I don't want to see any more ghostly faces peering in at the windows, I tell you."

Simon Krum, 79 years old, of 331 East Ninety-seventh street, New York, was arrested for begging the other day. Two bank books showing deposits of nearly \$1,000 were found on him. He was sentenced to ten days on Blackwell's Island by Magistrate Murphy in Yorkville Court. Detective Harvey of the Mendicancy Squad saw Krum going from store to store in Thirty-fourth street and begging from pedestrians. He followed the beggar and arrested him at Thirty-fourth street and Third avenue. The bank books were in a silk bag suspended from Krum's neck. He had \$16.06 in cash. "What's the use of working when money comes so easy," said the old man when he confessed that he had been begging for eight years. "I can't spend all the money I get and when I die I will leave it to charity."

NEWS OF THE DAY

The Kuskokwim River, the second largest river in Alaska, is about to be opened to commerce in consequence of the discovery, by Capt. Lukens of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, of a navigable channel in its extensive and hitherto little known delta. The river itself is navigable for a distance of 600 miles from its mouth, and is thus destined to make accessible a very promising mining, fishing and agricultural region.

Mrs. Harry C. Leach, wife of the pastor of the Morningside Baptist Church, Pittsfield, Mass., in an emergency, filled her husband's pulpit at both morning and evening services, preaching two sermons. Mr. Leach was called to Maine by the illness of his mother, and his wife volunteered to preach. Her evening subject was "The Heavenly Vision." Mr. and Mrs. Leach have been married about twelve years. This was her first appearance as his substitute in a pulpit.

A day laborer nine years ago, James M. Phillips, of Oley, Pa., can answer quite satisfactorily the question "Does farming pay?" He had a public vendue the other day, and the \$7,300 proceeds represented his net profits in the nine years. Mr. Phillips believes in specializing when it relates to the dairy herd, and in talking of his success with Ayrshire cows says it does not cost any more to raise pure-bred stock than mixed breed. The secret of his success he puts thus: "Tend to your own business; farm when it is time to farm, and rest or enjoy leisure when the proper time is at hand."

When the plans are in full operation for the government of Tangier, Morocco, "the first really international city of the world," the community will have as a legislative body an assembly chosen by popular vote and composed of twenty-four Moroccan members and eleven foreigners, representatives of the powers. A mixed court is provided for, along the lines of the international court in Egypt. The arrangement is that it is to consist of two Frenchmen, one of whom will preside; two Spaniards, two Englishmen, and one German. A Spaniard is to be public prosecutor. The war, of course, may upset the programme permanently.

Offering the advantages of an ideal athletic stadium, together with the accessibility of the location, the new Velodrome at Sheepshead Bay, which will be the home of cycle races around New York City in the future, also promises to be the grounds on which other athletic contests of the metropolitan district will be settled. General Manager Chapman, who succeeded the late Floyd A. McFarland, promises a cycling and motorcycle programme that will be a seasonal spectacle from May 22, the opening date, and the close of the season, every Tuesday and Saturday. It will be the greatest time for athletic organizations to hold their meets.

The actual number of workmen killed and injured annually in the United States is not known definitely. The best authorities, however, have estimated fatalities to the number of 40,000 to 45,000 annually, and non-fatal accidents producing an annual loss of 200,000,000 working days. Estimating the value to society of each man killed at \$5,000, and \$2 as an average daily wage of the non-fatally injured, the economic annual loss sustained by the nation amounts to approximately \$600,000,000. This is the amount which, in some way or other, must be charged to the production cost in the various industries where the accidents occurred.

Charges that George Farmer was shanghaied aboard the British mule ship, Anglo-Australian, at New Orleans, and that severe treatment afterward was contributory to his death, are made in a \$10,000 libel suit filed against the vessel by Edward Farmer, his father. Young Farmer died three days after the vessel left New Orleans, Feb. 17, for Avonmouth, according to reports of the vessel's officers, when they arrived recently. They said he had been seized with an epileptic fit soon after going aboard. In the petition filed the father charges that Farmer was taken aboard the vessel in an intoxicated condition and lashed to a stanchion. The petition sets forth his treatment resulted in a fit and that he died without attention.

When the Navy Department issued its order by which enlisted men overstaying their leave and committing other offenses were to be discharged at the option of the commanding officer, or placed on probation, there was much curiosity as to how the innovation would result. Statistics compiled by the Army and Navy Journal show that the desertions in July, 1914, were 222; in August, 1914, 360, and in September of the same year, 310. When the order was put into effect in October there were 259 desertions; in November they dropped to 193. Since that month the desertions have been as follows: December, 153; January, 116; February, 84, and all records were broken in March, when there were only fifty-four desertions.

A jury before Judge Julian Mack in the United States District Court, New York, recently awarded Mrs. Theresa Bump, a widow, of Baltimore, a verdict of \$15,000 in her suit against the French Line for injuries which she received on the steamship Rochambeau on April 14, 1914, while the ship was on the high sea. Mrs. Bump was returning from a vacation in Europe. According to her complaint, she was passing down a dark passageway to see where the captain had put her pet poodle when the ship struck a heavy sea and she was hurled against the wall of the passageway, sustaining a broken nose, two fractures of the jaw and other injuries. The ship's doctor, she says, treated her so unskillfully that she was forced upon her arrival here to expend a great amount of money to have the contour of her face restored.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

NEW ELECTRIC BELLS.

An original electric bell combination is in use at Paris which is designed to get rid of all trouble caused by the question of batteries, for these are now lodged within the apparatus itself. The usual box bell-shape is retained, but the arrangement of the parts is different in this case. All the magnet parts are now lodged under the gong itself, while the box, being now left free, serves to contain a set of three dry battery cells which will last for several years. In this way there are no connections to be made between the battery and bell, and the wires and push-button are the only pieces which need to be attended to.

WOMEN'S BANK A FAILURE.

The police of Berlin seized the books of the Women's Bank, which was widely heralded upon its organization two years ago as the only financial institution in the world organized, capitalized, and managed exclusively by women for women. This step was ordered in connection with proceedings instituted against the bank by the Crown Prosecutor for alleged fraud and misuse of deposits.

The bank started out well after its foundation and attracted large deposits from women, but later was chiefly conspicuous owing to its difficulties. The managers were forced to seek the assistance of men and it is said that at the beginning of the war they avoided bankruptcy only by establishing connections with one of the regular Berlin banks.

NEGRO DIES AT 123.

Major Johnson, negro, of Millville, Ga., who claimed to be 123 years old, was found dead in his bed recently as a result of influenza, which he contracted three weeks ago. According to a memorandum found among his belongings, which is said to be an exact copy of one given to a slave buyer in New Orleans by his original owner, Dr. Johnson, some years before the Civil War, Uncle Major, as he was familiarly known, was born May 5, 1792, in Wayne County, Ga.

About the age of maturity he removed with his master, Dr. Johnson, to South Carolina and remained there until a few years before the war between the States, where he was sold to a slave buyer in New Orleans.

Shortly afterward he was bought for \$2,000 by Captain Daniel Tobin, of Hampton, Ark. After a number of years of faithful service he went to Texas, where he remained for some time. Returning to Arkansas in 1895 he came to Millville.

EMDEN'S CREW FIGHTS ARABS.

The German officers and sailors who composed the crew of the cruiser Emden when she was sunk in the Indian Ocean by an Australian warship on November 10 have escaped again from allied patrol ships and arrived at the Arabian harbor of Lidd on March 27.

After reaching the coast the men attempted to continue their journey overland, but were attacked by Arabs. The Arabs were repulsed after three days' stubborn fighting and the sailors reached the road to Hodachas, where the railroad was open. The Germans, however, suffered heavy losses. This dispatch tells another chapter in the exploits of that remnant of the Emden's crew, who were members of a landing party on Cocos Island when the battle took place between the Australian cruiser Sydney and the Emden. Lieut. von Muecke, in charge of the landing party, commandeered the schooner Aysha and sailed away. From Manila came a report that they had captured a collier and had had been making raids on French commerce. On December 18 the French Ministry of Marine announced that the auxiliary cruiser Empress of Japan had captured the collier, with the men on board. Berlin heard on April 5, however, that the Aysha had reached Hodeida, Arabia. A dispatch received recently, referring to Lidd, may mean Jidda on the seacoast of Arabia. Apparently the Germans are making for Turkey.

CONTINUOUS AVIATION COMPETITIONS.

Most elaborate plans have been made by the Aero Club of America, in co-operation with its affiliated clubs, some twenty-five in number, for a series of daily competitions, continuing from July 4th. This competition is to be for the greatest distance covered in ten hours during the ninety days, and those making the best records will be awarded prizes, including a special daily prize of \$100. Flights may be made from any of the official aerodromes, to be designated in various parts of the United States, and any or all of the aviators may start each day.

These competitions are designed to assist the army and navy departments in developing aviation corps for the National Guard and Naval Militia, to demonstrate for the postoffice department the practicability of carrying mail by aeroplane to the hundreds of isolated places where it now takes days to deliver mail which could be delivered by aeroplane in a few hours, and to develop the sport in general.

The competitions are on the same plan as those for the Pommeroy Cup in France, which resulted in great benefit to the sport in that country, and developed many remarkable performances.

Nine prominent aviators and constructors have already made known their intention to enter these contests, and it is gratifying to the committee that all the entrants so far propose to use American-made aeroplanes and motors; and it is an encouraging indication of the interest aroused, and the progress made since our Government has shown an indication of its intention to increase the use of aeroplanes in the army and navy.

It is expected that among the contestants will be Lawrence B. Sperry, with two machines, one a regular land aeroplane and the other a flying boat, both equipped with gyroscopic stabilizers.

THE CREEPING MOUSE

This is the latest novelty. The mouse is of very natural appearance. When placed upon a mirror, wall, window or any other smooth surface, it will creep slowly downward without leaving the perpendicular surface. It is furnished with an adhesive gum-roll underneath which makes it stick. Very amusing to both young and old. Price 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

POCKET SAVINGS BANK.

A perfect little bank, handsomely nickel plated. Holds just five dollars (50 dimes). It cannot be opened until the bank is full, when it can be readily emptied and re-filled, ready to be again refilled. Every parent should see that their children have a small savings bank, as the early habit of saving their dimes is of the greatest importance. Habits formed in early life are seldom forgotten in later years. Price of this little bank, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

DUPLEX BICYCLE WHISTLE.

This is a double whistle, producing loud but very rich, harmonious sounds, entirely different from ordinary whistles. It is just the thing for bicyclists or sportsmen, its peculiar double and resonant tones at once attracting attention. It is an imported whistle, handsomely nickel plated, and will be found a very useful and handy pocket companion. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., sent by

mail, postpaid.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

RIISING PENCIL.

The performer exhibits an ordinary pencil and shows it top and bottom. The pencil is laid on the palm, the performer calling attention to his hypnotic power over innate objects. The pencil is seen slowly to rise, following the movements of the other

hand. The witnesses are asked to pass their hand around it to assure themselves no thread or hair is used. Price, 25c.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

PIGGY IN A COFFIN.

This is a wicked pig that died at an early age, and here he is in his coffin ready for burial. There will be a great many mourners at his funeral, for this coffin, pretty as it looks, is very tricky, and the man who gets it open will feel real grief. The coffin is made of metal, perfectly shaped and beautifully lacquered. The trick is to open it to see the pig. The man that tries it gets his fingers and feelings hurt, and piggy comes out to grunt at his victims. The tubular end of the coffin, which everyone (in trying to open) presses inward, contains a needle which stabs the victim in his thumb or finger every time. This is the latest and a very "impressive" trick. It can be opened easily by anyone in the secret, and as a neat catch-joke to save yourself from a bore is unsurpassed. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., postpaid; one dozen by express, 75c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE GREAT FIRE EATER.

A great Sensational Trick of the Day! With the Fire Eater in his possession any person can become a perfect salamander, apparently breathing fire and ejecting thousands of brilliant sparks from his mouth, to the horror and consternation of all beholders. Harmless fun for all times, seasons and places. If you wish to produce a decided sensation in your neighborhood don't fail to procure one. We send the Fire Eater with all the materials, in a handsome box, the cover of which is highly decorated with illustrations in various colors. Price of the complete only 15c., or 4 boxes for 50c., mailed postpaid, one dozen by express \$1.20.

Also included printed instructions for performing the trick. Each box, which also contains sufficient material for giving several exhibitions.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC NAIL.



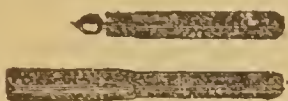
A common nail is given for examination, and then instantly shown pierced through the finger; and yet, when taken out, the finger is found to be perfectly uninjured, and the nail is again given to be examined. Nicely finished. Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

LINK THE LINK PUZZLE.



The sensation of the day. Pronounced by all, the most baffling and scientific novelty out. Thousands have worked at it for hours without mastering it, still it can be done in two seconds by giving the links the proper twist, but unless you know how, the harder you twist them the tighter they grow. Price, 6c.; 3 for 15c.; one dozen, 50c., by mail, postpaid.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE SURPRISE FOUNTAIN PEN



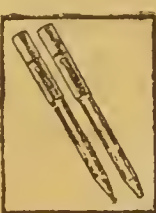
A novelty of the greatest merit! It looks just like a genuine fountain pen. But it isn't. That's where the joke comes in. If you take off the cover, a nice, ripe, juicy lemon appears. Then you give the friend you lend it to the merry "ha-ha." You might call it an everlasting joke because you can use it over and over again. Price, by mail, postpaid, 10c.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

FIFFI.

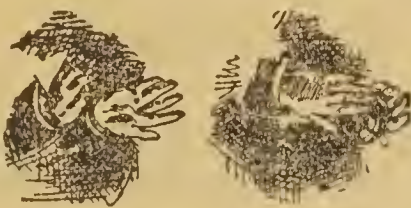


Also known as a Japanese butterfly. A pleasing novelty enclosed in an envelope. When the envelope is opened Fiffi will fly out through the air for several yards. Made of colored paper to represent a butterfly six inches wide. Price, 10c.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SLIDE THE PENCIL.



The pencil that keeps them guessing. Made of wood and lead just like an ordinary pencil, but when your victim starts to write with it—presto! the lead disappears. It is so constructed that the slightest pressure on the paper makes the lead slide into the wood. Very funny and a practical joke. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

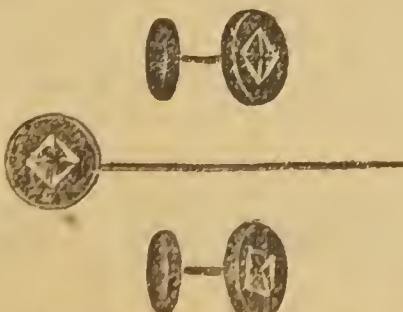


APPEARING BILLIARD BALL.—A solid billiard ball, beautifully made, can be made to appear in the bare hands with the sleeves rolled back to elbows. Very fine and easy to do. Price, 35c.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

IMITATION CUT FINGER.



A cardboard finger, carefully bandaged with linen, and the side and end are blood-stained. When you slip it on your finger and show it to your friends, just give a groan or two, nu se it up, and pull a look of pain. You will get nothing but sympathy until you give them the laugh. Then duck! Price, 10c., postpaid.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



GOLD PLATED COMBINATION SET.—With square turquoise stones. Price, 10c., postpaid.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



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YOUR best chance to clean up some money. Crescent Orangeade comes in powder form. You make the drink yourself. Our catalog, mailed FREE, tells how. Costs one-half cent a glass. Retail at 5c. Sells at ball games, picnics, circuses, dances, from house to house and to restaurants. Boys make \$5 to \$10 a day. Send 10c for trial package, postpaid, enough for seven-teen glasses, 86c in sales. Write today for FREE catalog and full information how to make \$30 weekly.
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REMEDY sent to you on FREE TRIAL. If it cures, send \$1.00; if not, don't. Give express office. Write today. W. E. Sterline, 837 Ohio Ave., Sidney, Ohio.



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WATCH FOB. Exactly like illustration. The latest fob out. Has bewitching little figure of Miss "September Morn" handsomely embossed on heavy metal plate. Beautiful oxidized silver finish. Size of medal 1 1/4 x 1 1/4. Genuine black leather strap. Boys, a real work of art. Classy, alluring. Makes 'em all take notice. Agents wanted everywhere. Dandy sample fob and our great easy money proposition to hustlers sent **Postpaid 25 cents.**

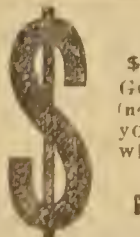
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THE FOUNTAIN RING.



A handsome ring connected with a rubber ball which is concealed in the palm of the hand. A gentle squeeze forces water or cologne in the face of the victim while he is examining it. The ball can be instantly filled by immersing ring in water same as a fountain pen filler. Price by mail, postpaid, 12c. each.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



STAR AND CRESCENT PUZZLE.

The puzzle is to separate the one star from the linked star and crescent without using force. Price by mail, postpaid 10c.; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO.,
29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE INK BLOT JOKER.



Fool Your Friends. —The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture, as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers, or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15c. each, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.



The biggest sell of the season. A real cigar made of tobacco, but secreted in the center of cigar about one-half inch from end is a fountain of sparklets. The moment the fire reaches this fountain hundreds of sparks of fire burst forth in every direction to the astonishment of the smoker. The fire is stage fire, and will not burn the skin or clothing. After the fireworks the victim can continue smoking the cigar to the end. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c; 1 dozen, 90c., mailed, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE HELLO PUZZLE.

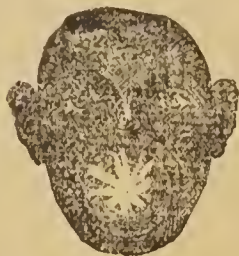


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